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"Hey! Yellowbacks!"

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THE WAR DIARY OF A
CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR

By

ERNEST L. MEYER

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Foreword by

WILLIAM ELLERY LEONARD

New York
THE JOHN DAY COMPANY

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Ernest L. Meyer was born in 1892 in Denver, Colorado, but spent most of his youth in Chicago and Milwaukee, and was educated in the public schools there. In 1915, after working for four years in various trades, he entered the University of Wisconsin. His wartime experiences before and after his expulsion from the university form the subject matter of this book. After his release from the army he worked for the American Union Against Militarism for one year. Since then he has been a member of the editorial staff of the *Capital Times* in Madison, Wisconsin.

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FOREWORD

THERE seem to me several reasons why Mr. Meyer's record of a war objector should be available to a larger public.[1] It is the record of a desperate adventure in self-reliance, the individual against the host, the luminous meaning of the single personality against the unknown and incalculable, but ever ominous, forces of mass-hostility and social machinery. An exploration, full of suspense as well as courage, and not without its moments of humor and pathos. A good story, in short.

It is a record of an important episode of the World War, viciously misunderstood at the time, and to date without adequate personal report. Important? How so? Have the social dreams of the war objectors come true: have these chaps started a movement? Apparently not. Have they gained even-

[1] The story ran in installments three times a week (1928) in Mr. Meyer's daily column in the *Capital Times,* Madison, Wis., alternating with the contemporary sketches and comments which as busy telegraph editor he yet finds time to scribble after the ticker sounds "30." (An anthology of these sketches has appeared in book form: *Making Light of the Times,* Capital Times Publishing Co., Madison, Wis., 1928.)

tually in prestige and power for themselves? I know of no one, among sundry with whom I am acquainted, whose subsequent career has not been thwarted: a brilliant university instructor of philosophy turned obscure editor of a labor journal; another, a research zoölogist, selling dye-stuffs on the road. They gained only their self-respect. Enough . . . yet not enough. This has long depressed some spectators. Possibly Mr. Meyer's book . . .

For it should be emphasized that this particular record concerns one of the two types of war objectors that can serve a realistic pacifism. The first type is the Quaker—mystical, but socially minded and organized for vast practical constructive ends. All other religious objectors, however admirable in their confrontation of individual martyrdom, belong to little cults, so asocial, so grotesque in ideas, customs, even dress, as to be worse than useless . . . making, in the popular mind, the war objector a lunatic or a comic strip, even more than a traitor or coward. It is mostly from Mr. Meyer's type, the so-called political objector, that realistic pacifism must get its recruits: young men (and in fact young women) who derive

their sanctions from clear thinking on statecraft, economics, internationalism, humanity, and from the moral idealism of sturdy character . . . who, moreover, believe they best serve their country by refusing to serve the designs of the Interests and the delusions of the Crowd. They are not religious mystics, they are not protagonists of any general philosophy of non-resistance: they represent simply normal common-sense *thoroughly* enlightened and normal self-determination *thoroughly* aroused and intransigent before a specific upheaval of intelligence and ethics. Few . . . very few to-day . . . but to-morrow?

Mr. Meyer for one, as the reader of this record will observe, took his stand and kept it without manifesting any of those symptoms that our war-time psychological experts discovered as the stigmata of all war objectors. There is nothing in his make-up of the "egocentric," the "introvert," the "megalomaniac," the "congenital coward" (subconsciously seeking refuge in his mother's womb), nothing even of the orneriness of the chronic kicker. And when this thing happened, he was one of the best students in

every class in college, one of the most likable and most liked fellows on the campus, the editor of the literary monthly and a leader in the more intellectual of student activities, a reader of great books, old and new, a tramper through the wooded glens and a canoeist down the wooded waterways of Wisconsin . . . a loyal friend, though an indifferent hater . . . abnormal only as having more than the normal endowment of wholesome, human qualities, including a quizzical humor.

Not even a hero. On that sunny afternoon in July, 1918, I happened to be the one who walked with him to the suburban street-car as he was off for the lone fight. "Well, Ernie, good-by—and good luck. . . . There'll be no trumpets . . . and no decorations, but, among other things, don't forget you're doing this job for me, too." And he waved a jaunty farewell from the rear platform.

WILLIAM ELLERY LEONARD

Madison, Wisconsin.

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UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN

Trial by Professors

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN

Trial by Professors

In those days, the invisible walls of the university shut out many things. The noise of industry, the fret of politics were scarcely heard in our cloister. Even the war across the ocean was a shadowy phenomenon, unrelated to our lives. It marched across the pages of the newspapers for a year, two years in spectacular headlines; it offered us fodder for debate, but it remained nebulous, and we argued without venom. There were things nearer at hand to which we gave ourselves and which claimed our enthusiasm and hope—a moment of revelation in the pages of a book, a walk with a friend under the Mendota willows, the making of a thesis or a sonnet, and the dream of one day walking the campus paths to classrooms of our own and claiming the men who labored on the Hill as colleagues in a good enterprise.

And then, so quickly that it seemed the miracle of a single day or a single week, the world leveled the barriers and rushed in upon us in a passionate flood. In a moment, when war came home to us, everything was different. The air was charged with an alien element, acrid and tingling, so that with every breath we took we were conscious of a new, unsettling power. Of a sudden, things that had seemed vital to us became trifles; war is domineering and brooks no rivals. Professors who had plodded for years in scholarly research laid away their manuscripts and wrote violent essays on the menace of imperialism. Students who had paid emotional tribute to the football god gave themselves wholeheartedly to the new master. They marched in new regiments on the lower campus parade ground. They lunged with fixed bayonets at dummies hanging from crossbars. They patrolled the armory, balking imagined plots of enemy spies. They raided a socialist meeting. They burnt in effigy a senator who had voted against war. They sang new songs. . . .

A few of us—a miserable few—did not sing. We had, each for himself, taken stock of this new god

in our universe and each of us had forsworn allegiance. We saw marked on the banners under which men marched away to war only new shibboleths leading to old disillusionment. We would not yield ourselves.

In the storm we found each other. A handful of students. A poet-professor of English, of old Yankee stock. An instructor of philosophy, a Jew. A professor of mathematics, a Hollander. A professor of physiology, a Canadian.

These were damned on the campus as "intellectuals." I was cursed as a German.

In the storm we clung together. We clung, also, to a few great names—Russell . . . Rolland . . . Randolph Bourne. Even with these we were still so few. It seemed an impertinence that we should stand apart and question the faith that was drawing the millions to the feet of the flaming god. It seemed an impertinence. . . . Friends came and pleaded: you are wrong. You are misled. This war is needful; it is just. It shall cleanse the world. . . . Friends came and threatened: you are stubborn. You are egocentric and anti-social. You are cowardly. You

are unpatriotic and love the enemy. It shall go hard with you. . . . Then friends came no more. . . . So in the storm we clung together.

Each of us, though life depended upon it, could take no other course. It was the inevitable fruition of the seed. Thus were we planted, thus nurtured, and thus in adult life did we lift strange spires in the gale.

For myself, I came of German parents. My father was a roving newspaper man, for years connected with German labor and radical publications in America. I was born in Denver in 1892, but most of my youth was spent in Chicago. And there, in the clash of industrial conflict, I was first exposed to the people and ideas that, when the time came, weighed more heavily than the commands of the military god.

Those were grim times in Chicago, thirty years ago. I can sense them still. They are vivid as a bad dream that cannot be shaken off at dawn. . . .

Father comes home to our little flat on the North side. He is a short man with a great, black full-beard

that seems, somehow, to give him stature. He is downcast, and sits brooding. Mother comes and sits beside him. . . . Nun, Georg, she says. . . . It is nothing, nothing, says father without looking up. Mother waits patiently; she knows he will speak when the time comes. Father shifts uneasily. . . . Well, then, here it is, he says. Things have come to an end. The workers' newspaper is foundering, and ah, dear God, never was its voice needed so badly as now with the great strike in its second month. But where was the money to come from, with thousands of comrades walking the streets in search of work, and the strike funds eaten up with the purchase of food? The printers are clamoring for their money; for a month, now, father himself has taken not a cent of pay for his labor.

Mother nods. She knows. We all know. Father looks gloomily at the tips of his square-toed boots. He is not often so. This must be bad then, really.

Then mother smiles. Come, there's no need for tears, father. Do you forget I am a practical nurse and can earn money, too? . . . No, no, it is impos-

sible. You must not. Besides, there are the three children. . . . Mother is ready with her answer. You forget again, father, says she, that Elsa is out of school now. She will take care of the children. . . . No, no, it is impossible. . . . But I want to, cries Elsa eagerly.

These women! But they win, they always win. So mother goes away each day on her strange errands and takes her workbag with her. While she sits at bedsides she knits, knits, knits by the dim light of the night-lamp; and she sells the products of her needle to the stores. Elsa dusts, sweeps, minds me and the baby. She had dreamed of high school, this child, but what are dreams in times like these? These grim times, months and years of months. . . . She will never see high school.

Father comes home nights, weary. He brings companions, grave, bearded men, and they sit hour after hour, talking earnestly in the tiny sitting room. The cause has lost here; it has won there. Schmidt has been arrested. The strike for the eight-hour day has again been crushed. . . . Two dead in the last mass meeting when police fired. . . . Mees has

given a hundred dollars to the newspaper fund. The paper will go on. . . . Mother is here. She comes in quietly and sits down, and drinks in every word, but her needles never stop flying for a moment. Martin Drescher recites a brave revolutionary poem, his own. Mother leans low over her knitting to hide her tears. . . . Mother is ashamed; when one works for the cause one must never cry. There is work to be done. One must go to the barricades with a song . . . the Marseillaise!

This was the only war I knew as a child—the unrelenting war of the dispossessed against the odds of greed and power, and to this war I can still lend my labors, but to no other. . . . Better times came. They managed, somehow, to send me to high school. And then, for four years, I became a worker at many trades: printer's apprentice, surveyor's assistant on the western desert, cook, dishwasher, handy-man, brush-cutter in the woods and box-car loader in a warehouse. Everything I saw and experienced, every worker with whom I lived and talked, lent validity to the things I had heard and

understood but dimly in the little sitting room in Chicago. These men were the bone and flesh behind the revolutionary phrases; these were the voices that rang in Martin Drescher's songs. And these, when war came, I might be called upon to kill: the German with whom I loaded heavy radiators into box-cars, the Englishman with whom I carried surveyor's topography poles over the hills, the little Jap with whom I washed dishes on the Seattle waterfront. I hated none of them, and most of them I loved. I could vision no circumstance in which I and the world would be made happier if I slew them, or they and the world would be made more joyous if they murdered me. We were all, all of us workers—German, Englishman, American and Jap—adrift in a world lost in the dark. If ever we were to walk together into the light it would be with our hands in the hands of our brothers and not at their throats. . . .

Four years in the world, and then, in 1915, to the University of Wisconsin, renowned for its tradition of freedom. The tradition was true. The air was bracing . . . until the war came and walked with

iron feet over the old freedom, the old fine sanity and love.

. . .

In the year of the whirlwind, how best might we dissenters labor to prevent the total collapse of individual freedom and check the tide of passion that was crushing out minority opinion? How might we work to stem the wave of mob violence, lynchings —all the terroristic technique by which a nation lashes its citizens into the white-heat of war? We called meetings of protest. We imported speakers. We were denied the use of university buildings—no voice on the campus dared lift itself openly to challenge the sanctity of the new god.

We rented buildings in the town. We held several meetings. We must be disciplined. The students, in uniform, marched upon our gathering place. They invaded the hall and seized the speaker. They had tar and feathers ready. They compelled the speaker and every person in the audience to lift up his hand and in the name of Christ swear allegiance to the new Messiah of gunpowder and poison gas.

And then we could meet together no more. All buildings on campus and in town were shut against us.

Many of us succumbed. Our number shrank to a little handful. We met most often in the home of a professor on the outskirts of town. There was a conviction, widely believed, that in the cellar of this house we were manufacturing bombs.

There was left only the printed word. I was editor-in-chief of the students' monthly magazine.

A professor of German, an alien, in the privacy of his own office, made a joke about the Liberty Loan button. He was speaking to a colleague; there was no one else in the room. The colleague, his pretended friend, carried the jest in outrage to the university authorities. . . . The professor was expelled, with wide publicity. The papers branded him as a spy.

In the college magazine the following month appeared an editorial condemning the action. It called upon the regents to reinstate the professor. It asked how a joke, uttered in private, could embarrass the allies in winning the war for democracy.

The editorial was denounced in the student and town papers. The board of editors was summoned before the Dean to sign a loyalty pledge. I resigned.

The professor of German, blacklisted, could find employment nowhere. He had a wife and two children. He planted cabbages and tomatoes in corner lots, and peddled them from door to door. He hired himself out for odd jobs to the few who knew and loved him. Often I saw him walking down the street with a great tank strapped to his shoulders. He was spraying trees. . . . His wife, an American girl, baked bread and sold it to the neighbors. . . . For two long, gray years.

In the year of the whirlwind, what should the dissenter's own attitude and conduct be? My friends, warm friends, marched away to the war. We had many sorrowful partings. It would have been so good, so easy to join them. . . . Ah, what conceit to set yourself up against all these good and honest people; is it possible that you are only stubborn, an egoist and a pro-German? That is what a professor of philosophy, whom I revered, told me . . . and

never spoke to me again. In my bed at night and on long walks by the lake these questions rose up and would not be stilled. But I knew that no matter what might come there was no turning back. No friendship or force could lead me to the battlefield to take life and consecrate error in human blood.

Conscription came. There was no war objector of draft age on our campus with whom I might consult. I wrote to a friend who also would refuse to serve. He advised me to register for the draft, as he was doing, and once in the army camp refuse the uniform and take the consequences. That was straightforward. I registered. There was a drawing of numbers. My number was far, far down the list. I would possibly not be called upon for a year.

I went about my business. Months passed, and the army sent out questionnaires to be filled in by the conscripts. I did not get a questionnaire. I had registered; let them get me when the time came. I did not think about the questionnaire.

But the Dean of Men did. The Dean of Men was the same dean who had had a hand in the dismissal

of the professor who had made a joke about the Liberty Loan button.

The Dean thought I was a draft evader. He had my records carefully examined. He discovered that I had registered for the draft, but that I had not returned the questionnaire.

The Dean called up the federal marshal.

In the first week of June, 1918, I was taken in custody and marched to the office of the marshal. He berated me furiously.

"The jail is full of such fellows as you. Why didn't you return the questionnaire?"

"I received none."

"You lie."

Very well, I lied. But it was the truth.

"Besides, that is no excuse. You should have sent for one. Will you fill out the questionnaire now?"

I would. I filled it out while he watched. There was one question: Which branch of the military service would you prefer? I set down my answer: None. I shall refuse the uniform and refuse all combatant and non-combatant service.

The marshal picked it up when I had finished. He looked at me darkly.

"We shall see. You know, of course, that as a penalty for failure to return this paper on time you are subject to immediate conscription. Otherwise you would have awaited your turn. You may return to your home and hold yourself prepared. We shall notify you when you must report for entrainment to the military camp."

It got into the papers, which made much of the affair.

Two days later I received word that I must appear before the university faculty discipline committee for a trial. This was a week before the final examinations of my junior year.

. . .

Meta and I walked up the long hill toward the office of the Dean of the College where my trial was to be held. It was late afternoon and the campus was warm and deserted.

Meta was one of the last of the dissenters. She was a strong girl, of great emotional and physical vigor.

We had grown close during that spring, the spring of the whirlwind. We went on long walks together, studied birds, paddled down the marshes and the chain of lakes. These things meant much. They meant everything. The rest was madness.

We came to the door of the Dean's office. She gave me her hand.

"I shall be waiting at the willows."

I went in. The committee was assembled. My class advisor, a good friend. The Dean of Men, the Dean of my College, three other professors. Very solemn.

I took my seat on a chair on the little platform.

The Dean of Men was prosecutor. He detailed the matter of the questionnaire. Then he read a letter from the federal marshal. I was a dangerous citizen, the marshal had written. Dangerous and unpatriotic.

The Dean of my College was judge.

"You have heard the charges. What do you say?"

"I am guilty. I have nothing to add."

"Nothing to add in defense or explanation of your conduct?"

"Nothing. Except that I have opposed the war

and shall continue to oppose the war with all my strength."

"Very well. You may retire into the hall for a moment. You will be called after we have taken a vote."

I left the room. After a moment I was recalled.

"It is the decision of this committee that you be expelled from the university."[1]

Only my good friend, my advisor, had cast a ballot for me.

I had known it would be so. And yet my throat constricted. I loved the university.

There was another friend on the committee, a professor of biology. We had spent happy hours together in the laboratory, and on field expeditions. As I left the building he overtook me and grasped my hand.

"I oppose your ideas with all my heart. I fought in the Spanish war, and were I younger I would fight in this. . . . And yet, now that you have declared yourself—well, don't falter."

I looked at the tall, kindly man in astonishment. His eyes were wet.

[1] Ten years later, by action of the regents, I was reinstated. But other interests and obligations prevented me from taking advantage of their generous action.

Meta was waiting in the canoe under the willows. She heard my footsteps on the gravel. She looked up swiftly.

"Well?"

I told her what had happened. She said nothing, but took her seat quickly in the bow. We pushed off. We paddled silently across the lake. Our paddles churned the water and made little whirlpools. The swirling funnels were like cups of wine, filled with the amber of the setting sun. We skirted the rocky shore of Second Point and came to the high, sandstone buttresses of Eagle Heights. Swallows were darting everywhere. We searched, as always, for nests, and found two within arm's length of the canoe, built on a projecting ledge. There were four young birds in each.

"See," said Meta, "they already boast markings. Such neat little fellows. Four scolding pastors in a pulpit. In frock coats."

We were sitting on the porch of the philosophy professor's home. A newsboy came down the hill, whistling. He flung a paper on the porch. Half mechanically, Meta picked it up and glanced at it. Sud-

denly she started, and put the paper behind her on the swing.

"What is it?"

"Nothing."

"Let me see."

I took the newspaper. The usual great headlines. A new allied drive. A new transport of American troops safely arrived in France. But down at the bottom of the page was a story from a military camp.

Seven war objectors at the camp had refused military service and had been sentenced to twenty-five years each in the Federal penitentiary at Leavenworth. Three had been sentenced to forty years. One had been sentenced to death, but the case had gone to the President for review.

After a while I said:

"There is no use being downcast. We had expected it."

"It means that you will have to face it alone. That is the hard part. No one will be allowed to see you in prison. No one but perhaps your parents . . . and your wife. We must be married. Then I can see you.

I might perhaps find work near the prison, and so be near you."

Prison. . . . How strange the garden behind the professor's house looked of a sudden. Already remote and withdrawn. The grass was cool under the apple trees, and the shadows of the hollyhocks fell in long, black bars across the gravel path.

We were married under those trees. Our two mothers were present, and a few friends.

For a wedding trip we went on a long walk, from village to village across the hills. For a week . . . under a cloud. Trying to ignore the cloud, trying to push away the thought of it and give ourselves wholly to each other and to the long valleys and the woods. No use.

Each day, from some hamlet, I called up my home. Was there a letter? A summons from the military board?

On the sixth day the answer was yes. I must report to the draft board in Milwaukee for entrainment to a military camp.

That night found us in the glen. Our old glen, re-

mote in the hills, a deep gulley barricaded against the world. Many nights I had slept in a cave, concealed high on a ledge there, loving the moist fragrance of the pinewoods above me and the monotone of the brook below.

"You can stay in your cave," said Meta as we stood below it on a boulder gray-green with ancient lichen. "You can stay there till the madness passes. I can bring you food. No one will know."

She knew she was jesting. And I knew. We might run away from the world, here in the quiet glen, but never from ourselves.

The troop train left from the Milwaukee station. There were six hundred of us conscripts bound for the training camp. There was a great crowd of thousands of relatives and friends at the station. We were led through the crowd and through a high iron fence to the coaches waiting in the train-shed. After the last of us had passed through, the gates in the iron fence were closed. The crowd outside could not come through.

Suddenly there was commotion and cheering. A

girl in a white dress was climbing the ten-foot iron barricade. From my window in the coach I could see it was Meta. She cleared the top and leaped. A policeman ran toward her. But a cry arose from the crowd: "Let her go! She's all right! Let her go!" The policeman laughed and did not bar her way.

She found me at the window. We looked at each other mutely. The train was moving.

"Write! Write often," she cried.

I nodded. The train-shed was filled with the noise of the grinding wheels and the shouts of the crowd and the conscripts. Everything was confusion.

I craned my head out of the window, looking back. She was still standing there. There was a great, black smudge on her skirt. That must have come from the iron fence when she climbed over it.

And I wrote:

CAMP TAYLOR

Trial by Contempt

CAMP TAYLOR

Trial by Contempt

Camp Taylor, Kentucky, July 26, 1918.—We arrived at the cantonment early this morning—two hundred draftees from the west. The thirty-six hour ride was a bedlam. Most of the men were drunk. All of them swore, sang, yelled obscenities through the windows at girls when the train halted at wayside stations, dug cinders from their eyes, shot crap, and tried to sleep curled up on the dirty straw seats of the day coach. The train was a load of confusion rolling on to a greater madness. At three cities Red Cross girl volunteers with baskets of chocolate and cigarettes boarded the coaches to distribute doles. Like tendering a cutlet to a tiger: the boys whooped, growled, pawed and scrambled, fighting for their share; one enormous buck, drunk and amorous, pursued a frightened Red Cross beauty the length of the aisle; she fled, spilling tinsel-papered chocolates

from her basket, while the men roared. . . . Queer. When the boys got on the train they were quiet, decent enough. The war has got into their veins already. They feel that war is a man's game, calling for masculinity, and masculinity, as they comprehend it, calls for swagger, swearing, whisky and incessant talk of sex couched in bald and vigorous terms. . . . And one little fellow, an Italian, sat huddled in a corner, white-faced and scared, incongruous as a sheep in a bullpen. "I guess," he confided to me, "maybe they send me back. I am so small, mister."

At two o'clock in the morning, under a full moon, the train stopped, and we were herded out of the coaches by a fussy non-com. We paraded raggedly down a cinder road, lugging our bags and suitcases; the little Italian scuttled at my side, a lost and lonely child. We soon came to the cantonment, vast acres of barrack roofs, gray slabs in the moonlight. After a parley between the non-com and the sentry we were admitted to the rectangular pattern of the army camp. We must become part of it; part of its rigidity and hardness. The crash of the gate behind

us was like the clang of a trap biting into one's vitals. The hardy bucks who had swaggered on the train were quiet and abashed; poor, grimy devils looking at each other silently, with the whisky-courage seeped out of their marrows.

"Madre mia," sighed the little Italian, shivering in the chill snap of the air. But the non-com had come into his own; on the train his authority had been flouted, but here his three stripes inherited new power. His commands came briskly, confidently. The two hundred followed, stifling their curses. Our shoes scuffed gravel on the silent streets; a sentry challenged, and we passed on. There were many stops; the army was sleepless, some of it, and in lighted barracks we were examined by doctors and receiving officers. There were papers to sign, questions to answer, and it was five in the morning before we were led to our destination, a barracks in the depot brigade development battalion. We bowed under our luggage, exhausted.

At 5:45 reveille sounded, and the two hundred were prodded out of their cots. Splashing in the latrine, with no officers near, they let loose their first

impressions of the army in a stream of curses. "Forty-five minutes' sleep in two days; by cripes, I'd like to smash that pasty-faced pouter pigeon of a non-com," cried the big buck who had chased the nurse down the train aisle. "You're in the army now," sang a malicious red-head. He was drowned by an uproar. Breakfast . . . soppy porridge, milk, corn pone and syrup all dumped together on a pie-plate . . . regulation mess-kits ran out, the mess sergeant explained. . . . Then, still in civilian togs, we were lined up and marched through camp for a physical examination. At galloping speed we were herded through a series of barracks; weighed, prodded, punched, tested . . . a thousand stark naked men, rushed like beef-cattle through a packing house, to be barked at and bullied by a battalion of harassed medics, sweating in the sultry barracks that smelled of disinfectants and flesh. I saw now and then my little Italian friend, pale under the indignity of prodding hands, and his eyes caught mine in mute and helpless appeal. . . . Then dress again, and march back, and dinner of beef, potatoes, sweet corn and chocolate pudding all dumped again in a

soggy mass on a pieplate . . . and back to the medical barracks to be run again through the line of white hands. . . . And then supper, and barracks, and cots and sleep . . . while the rookies swore in the dark after "lights out," and the little Italian closed his black Bible and slipped it with a sigh under his blanket. He had taken the cot next to mine. "And the doctor he say I am all right," he said sadly. "So the army keep me, such a small fellow." . . . A dark form behind a flashlight popped into the barracks door. "Quiet, men!" he roared.

. . .

July 27.—This morning, after mess, we were lined up in the company street and after roll call army uniforms were issued. "You will each of you try on a uniform and if it doesn't fit, swap around with your buddies till you get a good fit," the corporal commanded. The forty-six rookies in my barracks stripped and began pulling on breeches, shirts, puttees and shoes. My outfit, neatly folded, lay on my cot. I sat on the cot quietly, though I was conscious of the blood pumping in my veins.

The corporal came briskly toward me.

"Snap into it, buddy," he barked. "We ain't got all day to wait."

My throat felt constricted, dry. I rose, steeling myself with effort.

"I am not going to put on that uniform," I said.

The corporal looked at me without comprehension.

"You put on that uniform, see," he repeated mechanically, "and if it doesn't fit, why, you can swap around and—"

"I refuse to put on that uniform," I said, a little louder.

This time he understood. He stood there, dazed. The rookies around us had heard the dialogue. They closed in on us in a disheveled, curious knot, with their shirts half on, their breeches trailing.

Then the corporal came to life.

"Stand back, men," he bawled. "We'll take care of this son of a bitch!"

He shoved his way through the crowded barracks, and ran toward the door.

"Sergeant Harkenrider!" he yelled. "Sergeant Harkenrider."

His voice filled the company street. The men milled around me in a murmuring knot.

The corporal came bouncing into the barracks again with the sergeant at his heels. Top Sergeant Harkenrider was stocky, deep-chested, with close-shorn hair bleached by the sun to the color of new corn-silk. His light blue eyes seemed strangely washed-out in his swarthy face, tanned like a russet boot. He was an old army man. His uniform had been scrubbed and washed to an uneven lemon and white; his new brown puttees seemed alien bark grafted on a gray poplar.

The rookies had finished pulling on their clothes. They made way for the sergeant and the corporal, then closed around us, silently, standing on cots and peering over each other's shoulders. The sergeant planted himself squarely in front of me, with clenched fists half-raised.

"The corporal reports that you refuse to put on the uniform."

"I do."

"I order you, private, to put on that uniform!"

"I refuse."

The sergeant's face went brick-red. He drew a deep breath and expelled it in a gust of profanity. His fists swung menacingly. His face almost touched mine. I did not move. I waited for the blow. I had been prepared for this—torture, court-martial, a life in prison, and some of us had died. What of it? Everybody was dying, everywhere. Better to go under of one's own choice, with one's head up, than be dragged away against one's reason and conscience to slaughter and be slaughtered in a fantastic and meaningless war. The constriction had left my throat, the faces of the ring of rookies no longer swam as in a haze. They were waiting for the climax; bending forward avidly for the knockout.

But the blow never fell. The sergeant's curses exploded in a final: "Now, you god damn yellowback, will you put on that uniform?"

"I will not," I said.

The sergeant's china-blue eyes were sharp, bright pin-points in the bronze of his face.

"We'll see, you son of a bitch! Follow me."

He turned on his heel, shoving aside the rookies. I followed, with the corporal at my heels. At the barracks door, the sergeant turned.

"Corporal, have the men turn out. And order the men in the other barracks to assemble in the company street. Remember, corporal, what we did to the last white-livered slacker."

"Yes, sir."

The rookies followed us out of the barracks door.

The privates of the Twenty-second Company, Sixth Training Battalion, poured from the line of adjoining barracks. I was taken to the center of the dusty road between the buildings. It was 11 o'clock in the morning and stifling hot. The dust, kicked up by the sultry breeze, blew over the roofs in little gray whirlwinds. The two hundred rookies in their new uniforms crowded the porches, and closed in around the sergeant, the corporal and me in a dense mass. The buzz of talk died when the sergeant raised his hand.

"Men," he cried, "I am sorry to announce that we have a traitor among us. This fellow here, who came

to camp with you, who was accepted by you as one of your own kind, has turned out to be a yellow dog. He refuses to fight in the defense of his country. What'll we do to him, men?"

There was a moment of silence, then a confused shout. "Lynch the bastard!" "Shoot him!" "Let us take care of him, sergeant." The crowd milled excitedly, and more uniformed men came running down the narrow street between the barracks. Clinging to the railing on one of the porches was the little Italian, looking at me, bewildered and understanding nothing. The outcry grew to an uproar, which died away again when the sergeant once more lifted his hand.

"Corporal," he said, "will you tell these loyal boys and this fellow here," he indicated me with a gesture, "what we did to the last yellowback in the training battalion—that fellow who thought he was Jesus Christ Himself?"

"Yes, sir," said the corporal. "We provided the men with paddles and clubs, and we ran that slacker around the barracks and every man took a swing at him till he dropped."

Again the uproar, wilder, more shrill. Again the sergeant ordered silence.

"One more chance," he said, turning toward me. "One more chance. Now will you put on the uniform?"

"I will not."

The clamor broke once more. The rookies closed in in a tighter knot, their reddened, angry faces dust-streaked where the sweat ran. . . . The narrow street is baking hot with bodies close-pressed against each other, and the sun angry in the noon sky. The sun standing still. Everything standing still, waiting again for the climax. Why didn't they end it; strike out swiftly and end it . . . or give a man a fighting chance here in this dusty alley between the barracks. The sergeant still looks at me, waiting for a quaver, and the shouting continues, led by a big buck on the porch railing, who yells: "The paddles, sergeant; break out the paddles!" And then, although the sergeant has given no signal, the shouting subsides. An orderly pushes his way through the jammed street, and behind him a man in captain's uniform. . . . So the game will go on.

The sergeant and the corporal snapped to attention. The rookies straightened up, fumbling awkward salutes.

"What is wrong here, sergeant?" snapped the captain. He was young, wiry, polished, with steady, clever eyes and an even voice.

"We've found a slacker, sir, who refuses to put on the uniform."

The captain stepped up to me. "Mennonite?"

"No, sir," I answered.

"I didn't think so. You have no whiskers. Quaker?"

"No, sir. I belong to no church."

"Ah," said the captain coldly. "A new breed."

He turned to the sergeant.

"Sergeant, have this fellow brought to headquarters immediately. And clear the street."

The rookies straggled back into the barracks. I followed the orderly down the stifling street, rubbing the caked dust from my face.

The captain's quarters were at the front end of one of the barracks that had been dignified by fresh

paint. A couple of lieutenants idling in the anteroom leaped smartly to attention when he crossed the threshold, and eyed me with cold curiosity. My blue serge civilian suit, now that the rookies had been accoutered, was as conspicuous as a tuxedo in a penitentiary chain gang. The captain entered his office and sat down. It was intolerably hot. An electric fan rustled a stack of papers on the desk. The documents looked deadly, bristling with seals and eagles, impersonal as the acres of barracks and savage as sabers. The captain looked at me across the fluttering papers.

"You know what you are in for?"

"I know."

"If I can't touch your patriotism, perhaps I can appeal to your intelligence. I have had one so-called conscientious objector in my company. Ignorant lout. He can't see consequences. He lacks imagination. But you, surely, ought to foresee the results of your stubbornness. Disgrace. Court martial. Possibly a life-time in prison—I understand that a number have been sentenced to be shot. And even if you should come out again, with a whole skin, you

know what awaits you? Social disgrace and ostracism . . . could you face that?"

"I could, captain."

He looked at me contemptuously.

"I see. Like to pose as a martyr!"

"No, captain. The draftees are the martyrs. They have been dragged to war against their will to be sacrificed futilely. I pity them. I don't pity myself at all. I, at least, am saving something out of the war which may be sacrificed by a good many conscripts . . . my self-respect."

The captain reddened. His voice, which had been even, rose angrily.

"And you expect the rest of us to march to the battlefields and save this country from invasion so that you can stay here and nurse your precious self-respect?"

"I am not convinced that there is the slightest danger of invasion."

"I see," said the captain bitingly, "you disagree with the greatest minds in the country. I honestly can't understand your attitude. You are a pacifist?"

"Yes. Though not an absolutist."

"But you are against wars?"

"Yes."

"And so am I," cried the captain. "I hate war as much as you do. I have a home in the west and a business that I enjoy. But I gave them up to enter the officers' training school. I did it because I hate war. And this war will end all wars; there will never be another. We are crushing forever the spirit of militarism in the world. And if you really hate war, as you profess, I can't see how you can stand by and not give this war your support. Our president is no military man. We are really a nation of pacifists and this is a crusade."

"As bloody and meaningless as the rest of the crusades. Though I wish I were as convinced of the holiness of the war as you, captain. It would make things simpler. I can't believe that the allies have come into this with clean hands, or that a new era of international peace and justice will follow our victory. I grant that at present the Prussians represent the climax of the militaristic idea, but only because they have pursued it with more efficiency than their neighbors, and not because their neigh-

bors are innocent lambs. I believe that if Germany is crushed, there will be new alignments, and a new nation or a new alliance will ascend to military power, as in the past Rome, Spain, and England were in the saddle. I think war as an instrument has been discredited again and again, and I can't bring myself to commit murder in its name."

The captain listened impatiently, drumming his fingertips.

"And you dismiss such things as love of country and patriotism?"

"I love my country, but there is a patriotism that extends beyond national boundaries. I can feel no hatred for another nation or race merely because a group of war-makers sign an official paper."

"And I suppose you think your gesture will save the world?"

"No, captain, any more than all the cannons and armies will. But a couple of million of us might. You can't fight wars if the people fold their arms. Some day brothers will learn the sadness and silliness of butchering each other. My stand may be futile, but not to me."

The captain arose and walked to the window, looking out at the baking street where a sentry kicked up the dust in fine gray clouds. He had been patient with me. He might, perhaps, have needed to sign only one of those merciless papers on the desk to send me packing to the guardhouse. The documents, rustling under the electric fan, were weighted down by a glittering, military belt buckle.

The captain turned again.

"I don't know why I should feel sorry for you, but I do," he said. "Perhaps because when I went to college I used to have radical notions myself once in a while. I want to ask you one more question. Will you put on the uniform and take noncombatant service? You might be placed in the base hospital here in Camp Taylor. We have a number of Quakers there now. You will not be called to the front. Come, how about it?"

"No, captain."

"Why not?"

"Because I object to the whole game of war, and not the mere business of shooting guns. There is no essential difference between being a soldier and

patching up other men in hospitals to go out and continue the slaughter."

"Ah," said the captain maliciously, "your self-respect again. Will your self-respect allow you to work in the kitchen till your case is disposed of?"

"It will. From the time I entered this camp I considered myself, in effect, sentenced to the penitentiary. I expect to go to prison. I expect to work there. I may as well begin my sentence now."

"But feeding recruits—isn't that aiding war?"

"To be consistent, I should commit suicide. I suppose in wartime almost all of our actions aid war in some measure. There's a tax on cigarettes, which aids war, but I haven't quit smoking. All I can do is die, or draw a line somewhere. I've drawn the line. I'm ready to work if only to keep from going mad. I have no desire to go mad."

"You're a bit that way already," said the captain with almost a smile. Then he straightened. His military precision, which had dropped from him during the examination, returned.

"Lieutenant Roberts!" he called.

The lieutenant appeared.

"Take this man to the mess hall and turn him over to the mess sergeant," the captain ordered. "Inform him that he has refused military duty and will do K.P. until further orders. And instruct Sergeant Harkenrider that all men in the barracks are to leave him strictly alone. If anybody speaks with him, or if he is caught in the act of speaking to any private in the company, I am to be informed immediately."

"Yes, sir."

The captain sat down before his rustling papers. I followed the lieutenant out into the glaring sunlight.

The lieutenant preceded me down the hot road between the barracks. It was now nearly noon. It was 98 degrees in the shade, and, possibly, 112 in the sunlight. And in that glare I caught a glance of a strange drama. A bearded Mennonite youth, member of a Christian sect whose central faith is nonresistance, was standing against a barracks wall. The back of his bare head and his heels touched the hot planks. He had been ordered to stand so. He

had refused a soldier's uniform. A guard, watching him, stood in the narrow strip of shadow on the opposite side of the road. The sun beat down on the bearded face of the Mennonite. His blue eyes were bloodshot from the glare. His tight, black suit, fastened oddly with metal hooks instead of buttons, was covered with a layer of dust. His cheeks and forehead, where sweat had dripped, were streaked, showing red, scorched skin in the furrows under the grime. His shoulders sagged under the ordeal. As the lieutenant and I passed, close to him, he looked at us with expressionless eyes, and his head strained forward a little. Instantly the guard took a step toward him. "Up with that head!" The head went back again till it touched the hot plank. . . .

The lieutenant and I reached the mess-hall. Two rows of long, narrow, unpainted tables, scrubbed white, were laden with water pitchers and heaps of white bread, ready for the noon meal. In the back of the hall, three cooks in aprons, white pants, and dripping wet undershirts, were working between two ranges going full blast. A half dozen K.P.'s, chores over for a moment, were killing flies with

swatters. The mess sergeant came forward toward the lieutenant. He was a little, brisk fellow. The lieutenant repeated the captain's instructions.

"And you will see to it, sergeant," he added, "that he gets plenty of work—plenty!"

"I will, sir," promised the sergeant, looking at me hardly. "Follow me."

He took me back to the head cook.

"We've got one of those god damn yellowbacks here," said the sergeant. "Captain's orders are to work him hard."

"Sure thing. I'll give him every dirty pot in the place." The cook tried to look fierce, but he didn't succeed. He was moon-faced, jovial, with no more malice in him than a mustard seed.

"You'll find an extra pair of overalls behind the door there. And keep off your shirt. You won't need it. And hey, you at the sink there," he added, calling to a rookie who was sweating over a pile of pots, "you can drop that and chase flies. We got a new slave for the job."

The rookie wiped his hands dry, gratefully. I changed mv clothes and took my post at the big

sink. It was steaming with scalding water. The hot stove was two feet behind my back. In five minutes I was drenched with sweat from head to foot. The big cooking boilers with copper bottoms must be scoured till they shone, the cook ordered, and if any dirt was found clogged around the rim on the bottom of the boiler my head would come off. I scraped, dug, scratched, polished. It was not new work for me. I had washed dishes for half a year in a Seattle waterfront beanery and had cooked and washed dishes through a lean year at college. The pots shone. Meanwhile the rookies had come in from morning drill, and filed into the mess hall. The K.P.'s lined up at the counter, dishing out grub into mess-kits and pieplates. There was clatter, banging of metal cups. And more dishes, pitchers, pots for the sink. The perspiration ran down my face. I whistled. One must keep up a front, even with one's hands covered with grease and scorched fragments of beans under one's fingernails. The cook came over to inspect. He ran his finger around the copper bottom of a boiler and grunted approvingly.

"Good enough," he said. You must 'a put some elbow grease on this old pot, buddy. Say, what got into you anyhow to act like this?"

I whistled.

"You deaf?" asked the cook, a little nettled.

"You're not supposed to talk to me, and I'm not supposed to answer. That's what the captain ordered," I said. "I'd contaminate you."

"Contaminate hell," said the cook. "Let me tell you, buddy, I'm not so soft on this war myself. But you're a damn fool for cutting up this way. Shucks, we'll never get across anyhow. The Heinies are ready now to throw down their guns."

I leaned over the sink and scooped up the last pot.

"When you get done with that," said the cook, kindly, "you lay off for a spell, and have your chow."

I finished the pot. I had my dinner, and the cook sliced off a piece of pie that he had made especially for himself and his two assistants. He filled up a mess-kit cup with ice water, and dumped into it a half cupful of pineapple juice.

"Try this, buddy."

I went out on the little back porch for a breath of

air. Three K.P.'s were on the porch, peeling potatoes and slapping at the flies that buzzed around them. I looked at the wall of the barracks where two hours before I had seen the Mennonite boy. The figure in black was gone. The sun glared on the blank wall.

"Looking for your pal, that guy with whiskers?" asked one of the K.P.'s with a grin at the others.

"Yes. Did they take him away?"

"I'll say! They carried him away 'most an hour ago. I was settin' here and I seen it."

"Dead?"

"Hell, no. Just knocked out by the sun, I guess. I asked the guard. He keeled over, flat on his face, the poor bastard. But he had it coming to him."

"You damn right he had it coming to him," nodded another K.P. whom I dimly remembered having seen in the crowd that surrounded me in the morning. "I ain't got no use for the lousy yellowback. And you'll get yours next, baldy, if you don't act sensible."

The heat-waves shimmered in zigzags over the company street, and danced over the roofs of the

endless acres and acres of barracks. I felt the barracks as a solid wall, with the world beyond them beautiful, and unreal and unattainable. This was the grim, mad world. This was Camp Taylor, Kentucky. And they had tried to break the faith and the will of this Mennonite Christian who foolishly believed in the inviolability of the Word. In the loose dust, at the side of the barracks, were two deep footprints, but the boy in the black suit was gone.

. . .

July 31.—For four days I have been scouring pots, scrubbing tables, peeling potatoes, mopping floors and hauling coal in the mess-hall. The hours are from 5:30 A.M. to 7:30 P.M. The mess-sergeant, with lovely malice, has assigned me the job of carrying meals to our company's prisoners in the guardhouse. They have been jailed for A.W.O.L. and other minor offenses. I load up a great trayful of food, and walk down the hill to the stockade. The sergeant in charge carefully examines the dishes for concealed files, or forbidden cigarettes and dainties. I wait in the outer room, separated from the big one-

roomed cell by heavy bars. The prisoners crowd at the door hungrily, cursing the food and me. "Hey, you god damn slacker, we'll have you behind the bars soon. . . ." "You know it, Butch," says another, "and, boy, will we make him like it! . . ." "Pipe down," orders the sergeant, "we'll take care of him, don't you birds worry. . . ." I climb up the hill again, with the empty plates.

Fourteen hours a day in the kitchen, hot as a furnace. At night I return to the barracks to sleep with the uniformed rookies. The officers have tried to build a wall around me, break me by ostracism. My letters from home are withheld; none has reached me. Three nights ago the corporal in our barracks called the rookies to attention. "Men," he said, "this fellow has proved himself a coward and a traitor. Make him feel his lowness. Shun him like you would a snake." The rookies looked at me with hostility. I sat on my cot, whistling. You can't get your boilers steamed up about a man who minds his own business and whistles. The wall around me has already crumbled. It is the corporal, a chesty, snippish young fellow proud of his chevrons, who is

now disliked. The rookies defy the captain's orders and whisper to me. They mail my letters secretly at the Y.M.C.A. hut, so they'll escape the censor. They bring me things from the canteen. I am confined to barracks, and must not cross the company street. But the rookies bring me ice-cream cones, gum, chocolate and stamps. "Here you are, buddy," they whisper, handing me things in the dark after lights out. "Don't let the sons o' bitches buffalo you, kid. I wish I had your guts. Well, they got me this time, but you wait till they come around again . . ." The rookies hate the corporal with his strutting and swagger. They hate the army. They hate drilling in the infernal heat on a dusty parade ground, with a drill sergeant barking orders and cursing, and their throats choked with dust. They hate being dragged out of barracks after supper time to sing in the company street. What singing! The corporal bullies and blusters and exhorts. "Come on, men, put some pep into this. All together now, fellows: "There's a Long, Long Trail A-Winding . . ." The rookies open their throats and achieve pathetic disharmonies. I sit on my cot in the barracks, hearing

them through the open window. There is no heart in their soldier songs, no conviction, no recklessness. They are tired children, angry and puzzled. Why are they here? They go to the lectures at the Y.M.C.A. hut where Christian chaplains and lieutenants tell them why they are here. They are here to make the world safe for democracy, and it's Berlin or bust, say the chaplains and lieuts. The rookies remember the slogans; they chant the slogans, make a new religion of them, and tuck away the free Y.M.C.A. New Testament in their duffle bags. They repeat the slogans like parrots, but they do not sing like warriors. "Come, men," cries the corporal, "one more snappy song before we turn in: 'Over there, over there . . .'" The men wheeze a half-hearted chorus, and then tumble back into the barracks to curse the corporal and fling their wearied bodies on the cots. And yet in later years they will recall this as a grand, heroic escapade. They will forget the insults of non-coms, the prison pressure of the barracks walls, the dust and the heat, and the warm drinking water in the latrine. They will think of themselves as adventurers sharing in glorious enter-

prise. . . . The little, pale Italian even. He sits on his cot, brushing the dust out of his puttees. He has his hat on at a rakish tilt as if to convince himself that he is a son of Cæsar. But his eyes are as sad and resentful as a punished child's.

Yesterday I was summoned from the kitchen and fell in line with the rookies. We were marched through camp to a barrack where we filled out insurance papers and questionnaires. In my overalls, at the end of the line, I was conspicuous among my uniformed mates. Knots of soldiers along the route hurled questions. "Hey, buddies, who's the guy in fatigue?" "Yellowback!" And a chorus took up the refrain: "Yellowback, yellowback, we'll get you when we get back! . . ." In the barracks, bristling with clerks, the corporal ordered me to step out of ranks. He led me to the center of the big room and announced: "Here's a slacker. Who wants him?" "Here! Here!" cried a half dozen voices. And seven of them, one after another, ran me through a verbal gamut. They bullied, threatened, cursed, buried me under their contempt. . . . And to-day the ordeal

was repeated. We were taken for our first inoculation. Again the march under the hot sun; this time to face a line of medical assistants armed with hypodermic needles and brushes dipped in iodine. The rookies remove their shirts, place hand on hip, elevating their bare upper arms. The long needles look vicious. The rookies pale as they see the needles jabbed into their comrades' arms. Many of them faint. In the shadow of the barracks outside lie a long line of unconscious rookies. My turn comes. "Here's a slacker," announces my friend the corporal. "Give him all you got, doc." The long needle plunges into my arm, striking the bone. I smile at the corporal; more of a grimace than a smile. He glares back at me, and I walk through the line and out of the door, whistling.

This evening, after I came from the kitchen and bathed and changed my clothes, I met the top sergeant in the company street. The same top sergeant, Harkenrider, who had given me a tongue-lashing on the day of my arrival in camp.

The sergeant stopped me.

"Hello," he said, "still standing pat?"

"Yes."

He put his hand lightly on my shoulder.

"All right, boy," he said.

I looked at him in astonishment. He was smiling.

Then he turned on his heel and swung down the road. . . . From the street in front of the barrack came the voices of the men, herded together for their evening song. "The Yanks are coming, the Yanks are coming . . ." Their shadows in the long rays of the sunset bulk gigantically on the barracks walls. But they do not sing like warriors. Their voices are lost in an angry world.

. . .

August 16.—Incredible contrast. Yesterday I was still surrounded in an army barrack by two-score recruits stirring the sultry air with their profanity; to-day I have taken quarters with sixty solemn religionists, singing psalms and carrying their Bibles wherever they go. They are dressed in funereal black from top to toe; their hats have high crowns; their trousers have no pockets; their cheeks are ruddy and their eyes kindly but grave, even though they are all

mere boys. They are mostly Mennonites. And this is the isolated quarters of the conscientious objectors, on the very edge of Camp Taylor. Across the road, with no fence to bar the way, wave Kentucky cornfields, yellow-ripe.

Yesterday, accompanied by the corporal, I was brought to this queer place. There is a line of a dozen big tents, and, a little apart from the others, two more tents under guard, housing a dozen unfortunates whose consciences were found below specifications and who now are awaiting transfer to the disciplinary barracks at Leavenworth. The others await hearing by the President's special board; they are hoping to be awarded farm furloughs. Immediately on my arrival I was taken before a lieutenant. Again I was questioned. Again I was offered noncombatant work in the hospital or quartermaster's unit. Again I refused.

The relief of escaping the iron walls of the barrack prison, and spreading my blankets on the hard earthen floor of an airy tent. The relief of escaping from the ring of uniforms, the circle of contempt which had surrounded me for three nightmare

weeks. Unpacking my duffle bag, I felt a release from darkness and pressure, as if I had crawled from a cave into sunlight. Here was sanity again. Here were friends, and a welcome.

A half dozen of the boys crowded around me, questioning me gravely. What had been my treatment in the barracks? Excellent, I said, considering that it would have been entirely appropriate and within the limits of "military necessity" to have shot me. I had been threatened, bullied, but not harmed, I told them.

"You are lucky," said one boy. "See there," he added, lowering his head and exposing what appeared to be a big red contusion on his scalp.

"What is that?" I asked.

"They pulled out my hair, yanked it out while a couple of soldiers held me. I don't remember what happened then. I fainted."

"They took off all my clothes except my underwear," said another, "and first they hit me with belts till I bled and then tied me on a chair and put me under a cold shower bath."

"And the officers were aware of all this?" I asked.

"I don't know. I don't think so. It was mostly the privates and there were a couple of non-coms, too, I think. But you know we'd die first before putting on a uniform and killing a man," he added quietly. "We are Mennonites. What church do you belong to, brother?"

"None," I said.

They looked at each other a little put out.

"You don't belong to a church? Then why are you a conscientious objector?" asked the boy whose hair had been torn out.

"Well," I said, "perhaps I don't love God as much as you do, but I hate war just as much. Won't you allow me a conscience even if I'm not a church member?"

"But don't you believe in the Word?" asked the same boy earnestly.

"I'm afraid not," I admitted. "But it seems to me that has very little to do with active opposition to war. There are hundreds of millions of Christians in many nations who profess to believe in the divinity and teachings of Christ and yet go to battle swinging bloody bayonets."

"But would you ever take a life?" persisted the youth whose hair had been torn out. "For instance, if you were held up by a burglar would you hit him or offer resistance?"

"I certainly would," I said. "But I don't see the application of your illustration to this war. Wouldn't you resist a burglar?"

"No!" cried two or three voices.

And I felt, maybe unjustly, that I was again surrounded by a hostile ring. Perhaps not hostile, but shocked and unsympathetic. I felt the warmth of their welcome withdrawn, and suspicion in their eyes. Suspicion of my motives, my sincerity. I was sailing under false colors, a coward and slacker, merely afraid to go to war. I could read this verdict in their faces as they turned away and left me. Feeling very desolate, I finished stowing away my belongings in a shelved soap-box that was nailed to the tent-pole. Then I walked out into the morning sunlight, and sat on a mound in front of the tent, looking at the cornfield and the red tip of a distant barn nearly hidden by the tassels.

Perhaps an hour later the boy with the wounded

scalp came out of his tent and walked toward me. He held a Bible in his hand. I arose and greeted him. His blue eyes were very grave. "Do you mind," he asked, "if I sit down here with you and read the Bible to you?"

"Not at all," I answered truthfully. "I enjoy the Bible very much. Particularly Ecclesiastes, the Song of Solomon, Samuel and Matthew."

"This Bible is in German. Our group was started in Switzerland and Holland. Can you understand German?"

"Yes. Please sit down and read to me."

He sat down.

"I like St. Matthew best myself," he said. "And I—I think it may help you."

So he sat by me and read in a sober monotone, turning over the leaves with the broad, knotty fingers of a farm boy. There was a strangeness again in the air. Yesterday men in uniform, by threats and argument, had sought to convert me to the military faith. To-day a queer, kindly soul in black coat and trousers was trying to lead me into a fold far different.

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," read the Mennonite slowly. "Take my yoke upon you and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls."

His voice was low-pitched and intense.

We were interrupted by a sudden wild chorus of yells, and the throb of an army truck. A motor-load of recruits, bound for Louisville on furlough, roared by on the road, ten feet from our knoll. The soldiers waved their hands.

"Hi, whiskers!" they yelled.

My Mennonite friend looked after them without anger. He raised one hand and touched lightly the still sore wound on his scalp. Then he began reading again, quietly, and the open page of the Bible looked very white and pure in the bright sunlight.

While the Mennonite read to me from the Bible the morning sun had climbed. Pulsating heat hung over camp and cornfield. The dirt road in front of our tents seemed the dividing line between sanity and madness. On one side lay the Kentucky farm,

with sunbeams glinting on the broad, green corn leaves, and the silence there was broken by the shrilling of a locust and the faint, peaceful drone of an unseen windmill. On our side, to the dingy horizon, stretched the rectangular sides and roofs of the Camp Taylor barracks, ugly sheds housing ugliness. Soldiers briskly walking the streets added their olive drab to the brown-gray monochrome. From the distant parade ground came the impatient call of a bugle, and officers racing in motorcycle side-cars raked up dust clouds. The camp was stirring with ominous enterprise, but beyond the road the corn tassels rocked gently. A sparrow at its dust bath in the road regretted its ambition and flew to a fence post, looking at us with sleepy eyes.

The Mennonite came to the end of a chapter. He stopped, closing the Bible gently.

"Thank you," I said. "I enjoyed it very much."

"You're welcome. The Bible means everything to me. I don't know how I could have found strength without it. They took everything away from me in the barrack, you know, but when I begged for the

Bible they finally let me have it. I had it in my coat pocket when they pulled out my hair, and I kept my hand on it and it gave me strength."

His brown, strong hands held the Book reverently. They were the hands of a farm boy. He was a farm boy, he said, from Elkhart, Indiana, where there was quite a colony of Mennonites. I asked him about his faith. It was four hundred years old, and its followers had endured much, he said. The Mennonites sprang up in Zurich in 1523, as a protest against the non-Christian character of the existing church. They recognize no authority outside of the Bible, and maintain the sanctity of human life and of a man's word. They will not kill, nor will they take oath in court, nor accept public office. They believe in entire separation from the world; they live apart, pursuing holiness and fighting the lusts of the flesh in a society pledged to primitive discipline. They frown on the ornaments and embroideries of worldly life; they prescribe the tight, black, buttonless uniforms for the men, and the long skirts and bonnets for the women. They have no heirarchy of the church, but only "exhorters" chosen by the mem-

bers, and "elders" for administering the Lord's supper and baptism. In common with the early Christians, the founders of the order believed it was their duty to disobey laws of an alien power, and they were therefore persecuted both by the Protestants and the Catholics. Their movement spread from Zurich to Holland, where Menno Simons became their leader, whose name later became the name of their sect. In Holland the Mennonites were exempt from military service, oath-taking and public office. In France they were exempt from military service in 1793, and Napoleon employed them in hospital service. The Mennonites came to America first in 1683, settling in Pennsylvania. In their communities they speak low-German. They believe that razors and buttons are unlawful.

"Why is that?" I asked.

"It is not set down in the Bible that men should shave or wear buttons," said my friend. He fingered his reddish stubble beard cautiously. "They are making us shave," he added sadly. "To-day or to-morrow the sergeant will come into our tent and force us to shave. He did that a week ago. Now

he will notice my beard again and make me take it off. He doesn't know what it means to us. He is very cruel."

I repressed a smile, conscious of real even if ridiculous tragedy. And I wondered if it was a matter of vital necessity for the United States army to shave a Mennonite's beard in order to help the allies make the world safe for democracy. Weren't the Mennonites part of our democracy; with all their oddities, weren't they useful farmers and a part of our curious national heterogony? Why had they been brought to camp at all? Their faith was long-rooted; their opposition to war unshakable and historically recognized. Why had they not been sent back to their prayers and their toil by the local draft boards, instead of being dragged to camp to be bullied and tortured in army barracks for dreadful weeks before being segregated with their kind? Their pacifism was not political heresy, not the dangerous doctrine of radicals; they lived apart in a world of their own, followers of Christ, and they had left no visible imprint on our military civilization through the four centuries of their existence. They would always re-

main the passive victims of war, and never the active enemies of the military order.

"But now that you've been removed from the barracks, you no longer are tortured—except for the matter of shaving your beards?" I asked my friend.

"It is better here, much better," replied the Mennonite. "But we are still in danger. We are part of the Development Battalion—the sick and illiterate soldiers. Do you see that barrack right across from our tents?"

"Yes."

"It is full of soldiers suffering from venereal disease. And we are afraid we shall catch those diseases."

"But why? There is little danger."

"Because," said the Mennonite, "we are compelled to use the same mess-hall that they use—and the same latrine."

"What!"

"It is true. We are afraid to use the latrine, but what can we do? We must. And every man in that barrack is diseased and hates us, and makes threats —you understand?"

I understood. And though I had come to learn cruelty more deadly in the army camps, I had met none more subtle and awful. It takes amazing cunning, amazing brutality to conceive a notion like this: segregating the disciples of Christ with the diseased retinue of the camp-following prostitutes.

And we were waving banners in a holy war.

. . .

August 22.—Life among the Mennonites in their segregated camp is as circumscribed by their creed as the routine of the barracks' soldiers is narrowed by the military manual. They are kindly, courageous, but dull. They suffer much from their persecutors, but they endure more under the rigorous discipline of their own faith. At least so it appears to me, not as well equipped with humility and meekness as are these unworldly followers of Christ. They sing, pray eternally, and the loudest and most earnest of them are the two-dozen prisoners awaiting transfer to the military penitentiary, who are under heavy guard in the group of end tents of our little colony. I hear

them in the morning; I hear them in the afternoon and at night until taps, whipping up their spirits under the lash of religious ecstasy. Their voices go rolling over the camp: "He will take care of you, through all the day, for all the way . . ." and now and then knots of soldiers gather in front of the barrack across the way and yell back jeers: "Hi, whiskers—let's have 'Beautiful K-K-Katy!'" . . . We never see these hidden choristers in the tent except at mealtimes. Then they march, under guard, to the mess-hall. While the rest of us sit on the benches, they eat standing up, and, condemned to silence, they look over at us gravely, or try to beckon messages to their friends when the guards are not looking. Then they march soberly back to their tents, and sing hymns again, soberly.

I cannot complain of our treatment. Our distress is mostly psychological. We see these prisoners at mess each day and wonder when we, too, will be eating standing up and confined to the ominous knot of tents. We are at the mercy of unseen, implacable powers; but so, of course, are the uniformed soldiers in camp. There is an iron force dominating over

this military reservation against which the individual beats his head helplessly. Only the blindest loyalty—or the basest fear—could make these soldiers submit so slavishly to the goad. I wonder if it will ever be determined in later days whether it was fear or devotion or stupidity that made the military overlordship possible; that made two million men, priding themselves as free-born, submit tamely to the dictatorship of the iron gauntlet.

More awful than this sense of impotency is the specter of our immediate danger. Whether real or fancied, I am not versed enough in medical science to know, but real or not, the distress of our group is acute. We are still segregated with the diseased and unfit soldiers; we are still forced to use the latrine in the barracks occupied entirely by venereals, and though we take the utmost and perhaps most ridiculous precautions to guard against infection, the knowledge of our peril weighs on us like a nightmare. Last night, in the dark, one of the Mennonites came to me in my tent and whispered in great fright:

"I think I've got it."

"What? Is this Joseph?"

"Yes, this is Joseph."

"What's wrong, Joseph? What have you got?"

He named a dreadful disease.

"What makes you think so, Joseph?"

"I broke out in a rash," he whispered. I could feel him tremble. "I've never been sick before. I've been afraid to tell the boys in my tent. I haven't slept for two nights."

"You may be wrong, Joseph. It may be nothing," I assured him. "But to-morrow, just to ease your mind, you must report on sick call and see the doctor. Will you do that?"

He promised, and stole out of the tent. And this noon he came to me happily. He had been to the doctor. It was nothing serious, the doctor had said. Now he could sleep again. . . . I knew without asking that all of our group had survived kindred frights. Each visit to the barrack across the street is fraught with anxiety. We choose hours when the soldiers were likely to be at mess, but there are always stragglers. "We'll get you yet," say the soldiers with a meaningful laugh.

The Development Battalion is the backwash of the military camp. All diseased or illiterate. Four days ago a Y.M.C.A. official came to our tents and asked for more volunteers to teach in the beginners' English classes at the "Y" hut. A half dozen of us volunteered. Why not? There would be a day, perhaps, when reading would help them to sanity, even though it would be employed at present in conning the patriotic handbooks of the Y.M.C.A.—whose Christian officials never came to our c. o. camp to encourage the Mennonites in their devotion to the Christian ideals. . . . I have become a teacher, four hours each day, of a pathetic assemblage of negroes and whites suffering from hookworm, rheumatism, and unnameable venereal diseases—the saddest and most sodden lot of humans that could be collected under one roof. There are illiterate "crackers" from the mountain areas of the south, Lithuanians and Poles frightened and lost as dumb cattle, rounded up in the draft net in Chicago slums, and negro bucks from Mississippi and Alabama. The negroes, perhaps because inured to slavery, have retained some semblance of animation, some shreds of happiness.

They are segregated in a separate class, and there is a lightness and humor in this group that I enjoy. But the others . . .

I open the primer, a specially prepared primer calculated to arouse martial enthusiasm and love of country.

"Alvin, will you begin reading on page three, please?"

Alvin arises. He is stooped, weazened, an hereditary venereal victim from the back-hills of Kentucky. He has the brain of a six-year-old; the body of a man of seventy. But his age is twenty-three.

"This is our flag," reads Alvin, following the words with his fingers. "What are the colors of our flag? Red, white, and blue. Our flag has never done wrong."

"Is that true, Alvin?"

"I dunno."

"Sure. Sure," whispers the boy next to Alvin.

"Sure," says Alvin.

"Why are we at war, Alvin? And whom are we fighting?"

Alvin studies the book carefully.

"I didn't read that fur," he complains.

I look at the corporal, who brought the men from the barracks. The corporal is dozing by the open window. It is very hot and close in the room.

"We'll skip this page and skip the next page," I announce, "and go on to this story about the cow."

Alvin grins. He knows cows. But he doesn't know why a recruiting officer summoned him before the draft board and sent him to camp, where they will try to mend his diseased body to provide more food for the hungry pits in France. Alvin doesn't have to know. The pits aren't particular. Alvin, if he is patched up a bit, will be ready for the magnificent democracy of the charnel house.

August 23.—I am still teaching reading, eight hours a day now, to the mental and physical cripples of the Development Battalion. It is dull and depressing, this business of facing a roomful of uniformed débris and looking into vacuous faces. The men are pitiful. Added to their bodily ailments is a kind of psychological malaria that leaves them inert, shiftless, sodden. The routine of the barracks has dried

up whatever founts of animal spirits they may have come to camp with. They are docile—docile as the dead. Corporals call their disease "bunk fever," and make periodic attempts to prod them into life; but the poor rookies have developed enormous powers of resistance to stimuli and when pressure is removed they collapse like paper bags. And this is material for a classroom! For an army!

More amusing than my efforts to teach them the mysteries of reading are the attempts of the Y.M.C.A. officials to initiate them into the delights of patriotism. The officials make impassioned pleas, but the elocutionary masterpieces fall into a dead silence. Even the well-worn slogans of this war, so effective with the average audience, are lost upon the waterlogged backwash of the Development Battalion. Love of fatherland is not instinctive; it is implanted, and no seeds have sprouted in these distorted bodies. How can a Georgia negro, sick with fever caught in a prison camp, or a boy fresh from the horror of a Kentucky soft-coal mine vision Uncle Sam as a benign Santa Claus for whom it would be very pleasant to get blown to bits by a

German hand grenade? I talked with the lad from the coal district yesterday. He is tall, emaciated, bent with rheumatism. "From working in the pits," he said, "at $2.40 a day. My father died in a mine explosion. I would've pulled up my stakes long ago, but the company owns our house and they would've chucked my mother and the kids in the street. We are always in debt to the company, and if I'd cleared out I'd had a fat chance to land a job somewheres else, what with the blacklist and the company dicks. So I hung on, till they grabbed me in the last draft, rheumatism and all. I'm sending home my allotment, but I bet it's going hard with 'em. I'm glad I'm not getting letters from home. My mother can't read or write."

When the Y.M.C.A. official takes over the Americanization class, dwelling on the excellencies of democracy which are being imperiled by the Hun, the boy from the coal fields sits with his shoulders hunched and stares at the pine floor of the hut. There is no resentment in his face, only a great emptiness. The speaker is dealing with symbols as strange as Sanskrit. "Liberty." "Equal opportunity."

"Happiness." What meanings can these words convey to the hunched rheumatic, or the negro ill from confinement in a Georgia prison camp, or the two Lithuanian brothers—not even citizens—who were snatched from a Chicago sweatshop, led before a court, and in company with a hundred other puzzled aliens had first naturalization papers thrust into their hands a day before being herded to the military camp? They sit with blinking eyes, moving cramped limbs, and now and then the corporal thumps for attention and there is a startled motion in the class like dead leaves stirred by a gust. "The objects of this war," says the tightly-buttoned Y.M.C.A. speaker, mopping his brow, "have been defined by President Wilson in his message to Congress. . . ." Greek, man, you are talking Greek, say the tired eyes of the Battalion derelicts.

After my eight hours of school, I walk a mile through camp to the tent colony of the Mennonites and reënter a world as alien as the one I have just left. On the parched lawn before the tents are a dozen grave figures, Bibles on knees, reading and

discussing in soft-spoken monotones. From the corner tent, under guard, comes the inevitable hymn of the prisoners. Here, too, the Americanization orators would be talking into the wind. The Mennonites have withdrawn themselves from political life as effectively as if they had migrated to the moon. They carry the shield of the Lord, waving no worldly banners.

They treat me kindly, though there is still suspicion in their attitude, and a lingering resentment of my heresy. My three tent-mates go each night into a neighboring tent for a song and prayer meeting, mercifully leaving me to solitude and the handful of tiny Shakespeares and miniature books of poems which, concealed in the toes of my extra boots, I smuggled into camp. This is the full-moon season; it is good to be alone at the tent-door, reading by candle-light, with the cornfield across the road freighting the air with the fragrance of leaf and soil. The camp seems almost kindly in the moonlight, and there is nothing so indescribably beautiful as a distant bugle blowing taps. . . . There may be an end to even this fugitive beauty. To-

morrow, we hear, we are to be removed to Camp Sherman, Ohio, where we will be given a hearing by a special board and then either sent to work on the farms—or to Leavenworth. The moon and the cornfield seem doubly precious to-night.

CAMP SHERMAN

Trial by Stagnation

CAMP SHERMAN

Trial by Stagnation

CAMP SHERMAN, Ohio, August 26, 1919.—The tents of the Christian crusaders are ranged on the outskirts of this military reservation like the slightly bedraggled fringe on the robe of Mars. Our colony lacks the color and war-cries of the army that lay before Antioch, but its roster is as varied as the roll-call of the nations who poured into Palestine. There are Mennonites, Molokans, Christadelphians, Plymouth Brethren, Adventists, Quakers, and members of the Church of God (Holiness), Church of Christ, Pentecostal, Apostolic Faith, International Bible Students, and the House of David. There are some 160 of us, and we are an extra thumb, a sore thumb on the military fist—not even a thumb, for we are too minute, too impotent. To the east of us range the endless barracks, housing 60,000 conscripts; behind us to the west rises a steep, wooded bluff, and we are caught between the barracks and the bluff—

forty tentfuls of hymn-singing religionists and myself, refusing to wear uniforms or go to war, and waiting for the lightning to strike. I arrived here last night, together with the Mennonites from Camp Taylor, and presently a board will sit in judgment upon us and our ludicrous Children's Crusade will be added to the long record of historical gestures.

I said that we were a slightly bedraggled fringe on the robe of Mars, and the simile is accurate. We trail in the mud. We sleep on cots in tents without floors. All day it has been raining, and we are splattered with the mud of Ohio clay. Our wet, wrinkled civilian clothes cling to us in knots and bunches. Can I blame the lieutenant who this morning observed us lined up for roll-call for turning to the sergeant and saying: "A fine bunch of lousy rats we have here, sergeant?" Can I blame the sergeant's nose for wrinkling as if a flea had bitten him? I can't. We cut a sorry figure, incomprehensible to the military mind, choosing the foul rags of madness for the sweet good sense of martial splendor—for we are insane, officially, having been solemnly assured by the intelligence testers that we

are egocentrics suffering from the Saviour monomania and other fixations. "Lousy rats, sergeant," said the lieutenant, and I wondered that he did not blow a whistle to summon the exterminator squad. Well, some of us may be exterminated. A corporal this morning told us with relish that a communique on the captain's table carried the news that five or six conscientious objectors had been court-martialed and sentenced to be shot by musketry until dead. Which may or may not be true, but the speculation is fascinating. Especially on this rainy day, this muddy, lugubrious day, with the hymns of the Crusaders arising from a tent here and a tent there in fragments unspeakably melancholy. The bluff, dripping wet, would make an interesting background for the execution squad.[1]

I wander, a crusader without God or hymnal, from tent to tent and poke my nose into their gloom. In each tent a knot of religionists hunched on their

[1] After the war I found that the corporal was truthful. Seventeen war objectors were sentenced to be shot to death, and 142 to life terms, but in all cases the sentences were reduced on review to from three to ten years in Leavenworth.

cots to keep off the floor awash with rain and mud. In each tent singing of psalms, reading of Bibles, writing of letters and endless theological disputes. The Pentecostals hear mystic voices in the air. The Molokans are guided by the Holy Spirit and sometimes they are possessed of the spirit and jump up and down under its behest, and so are called Holy Jumpers. The International Bible Students believe that the return of Christ is close at hand, and it is wrong and foolish to engage in earthly war when His day is imminent. The Amish Mennonites will not fight or shave; the Quakers will not hate; but despite the enormous cleavage of beliefs there is in each group the stamp of tolerance, and kindliness and courage. But arguments are endless. I hear amazing discourse.

"How tall are you?" asks one Crusader of another while the rain plops on the canvas roof and the hours drag.

"Me? I'm just six feet."

"No, brother, you can't be."

"Why can't I be, Menno?"

"You may be just a bit over six feet or just a bit

under six feet, but you can't be six feet exactly, brother."

"Why not?"

"Because there's just one person in the whole world who is just exactly six feet, brother, and that's the Lord God."

There is a buzz of comment, much turning of Bible pages, and the law-giver finds chapter and verse to dumfound doubters.

"How you must study the Book," cries one.

"I do," nods the law-giver. "I know much of it by heart. I am not an Amish Mennonite, brother, but I can tell you why an Amish Mennonite will not shave his beard or his head and thinks the razor the invention of Satan. See, brother, here: Leviticus 19:27, where it is set down that 'Ye shall not round the corners of your heads, neither shalt thou mar the corners of thy beard.' You will find many strange laws in the Bible, brother."

Into the tent comes a colored youth, smiling, very much at home.

"Brewer!" cry the Crusaders. "Stay with us, Brewer."

Brewer is short and fat, with an infinite good humor.

"Are you a c. o.?" I ask.

"Ah's following of the Lawd," says the Negro, "and don't want nuffin to do with killing, sah. When dey ast me is yo a consh—a—what yo call it?"

"Conscientious objector?"

"Dass it! Dass what dey say. An' ah says ah don't know what dat is, but ah ain't gonna kill nobuddy, an' dey cain't make me. An' what a beating ah done get—ah nearly died, ah did. An' ah tells 'em about the word of Christ, an' dey ast me how 'bout some battant service."

"Non-combatant service?"

"Dass it. Does ah have to tote a stretcher? ah says. Sure, dey says. An' ah tells 'em no sah, if dey's a dead man around where ah is, he's gonna be alone—dass all!"

Brewer shows white teeth in an enormous laugh.

He annoys the officers by trying to convert them. He is a Southern Baptist. He didn't break under

torment. He is awaiting assignment to the camp base hospital.

We are a curious crew, waiting in the rain for the end.

. . .

August 27.—This is written by the light of a candle in a tent musty with the smell of damp blankets, wet clothes and the acrid odor of mud. Across from me, seated on one cot, are my three Mennonite tent-mates, listening to one of them, Yoder, read from the Bible. The boys' faces are more than ordinarily grave, and there is a special heaviness in Yoder's voice as he reads the narrative of the Saviour's walk to Golgotha. The silence is invaded only by his voice and the rain plopping on the canvas and splashing in the pool under the ridge outside. The neighboring tents, too, are silent. When I thrust my head out of the door a moment ago I heard no hymns or hallelujahs anywhere; the whole Crusaders' colony is wet, desolate and quiet. Perhaps they all are praying as Yoder is praying, leaning on Heaven for help.

Well, they have need of it to-night. We passed to-

day through the third degree; our consciences have been officially weighed and analyzed, and you shall soon learn, dear wife, whether to write me here or in the guardhouse. I confess I share the heaviness that presses upon my religious friends; though the thought of prison has almost become too familiar to be frightening. Perhaps it is only the eternal rain, and my loneliness. I can speak neither the tongue of the Crusaders nor the jargon of the military men.

To-day the board appointed by the President to give a hearing to the war objectors was in Camp Sherman. The board is composed of Dean Harlan Stone of the Columbia law school, Judge Julian Mack of Chicago and Major Walter Kellogg of the Army, but only Dean Stone was here to conduct the inquiry. He was, I assure you, enough.

The trial was held in the captain's cottage at the end of the long double line of Crusaders' tents. On the muddy street, between the rows of tents, we were herded in the rain—a hundred and sixty slovenly men whispering encouragement to each other and wondering at the travail that lay behind the closed door of the cottage. We were divided into groups,

according to our professed faiths: there were a large knot of Mennonites, a knot of Quakers, and smaller handfuls of a half-dozen other religious schools. And I—because I belong to no church—was unclassified and was placed alone at the tail end of the long line.

A sergeant in a slicker herded the groups into the cottage, one by one. Long moments passed, and he herded them out again, with commands to return at once to their tents and not mingle with the waiting line. The men who had survived the ordeal passed by us gravely, with unreadable faces. I learned later that their hearings had been swift, and their interrogation simple. "Were they non-resisting Christians, members of a recognized sect?" They were. "If their mothers were about to be attacked by a burglar would they try to stop the burglar or do him harm?" They would not. "Would they accept a farm furlough?" They would. "That will be all, sergeant."

Two long hours in the drizzle. The long line melted away. I faced the door. The sergeant called my name.

The little room was filled with men in uniform. Dean Stone sat at a table, with a stenographer next to him. I think, comrade, I went a little dizzy with stage fright and the weariness of the long wait, standing motionless in the rain. The room was warm, crowded, hostile, and for a brief space I felt that I was back at the dean's office in the University when six grave men expelled me from the campus for unpatriotic conduct. But here I felt more hemmed in, more lost.

Dean Stone, sharp-eyed, keen, fired questions at me for twenty minutes. I stood in the center of the floor, hat in hand, and my wet, muddy shoes left a pool on the floor. The pool seemed to have some fascination for the captain at the Dean's side—he shifted his glance from my shoes to my face, and I could feel the contempt in his eyes, and the collective contempt of the ring of officers which was understandable but more goading than blows. I can't write you, comrade, of the inquisition in detail, for the words are lost in a maze. What I recall most vividly is the scrutiny of the captain, and the swift, sharp questions of the Dean rapped out

one after the other with the precision of hammer-blows. But I remember that the chief argument centered about the distinction between force and warfare.

"You are a member of no church?"

"No, sir."

"Socialist?"

"I share many of their beliefs, but I am not a member of the party."

"What would you do if you were attacked, or a burglar entered your house and tried to rape your wife or mother?"

"Resist him. Try to save my wife."

"Then how can you maintain your position in opposition to war? You sanction the use of force."

"I see no analogy whatever in your comparison. I can't concede that this is a defensive war, or that the issue can be stated as simply as your burglar illustration suggests. You imply in this war one side is an innocent wife or mother and the other side a fiend. I can't admit this. Also, in the case of me against the burglar, I may have no other resource except my fist; I am dealing with one individual.

But in war we are dealing with nations, and no nation is composed exclusively of thugs and degenerates. It seems to me that America, as the outstanding neutral, could have exerted enough pressure to bring about peace without resorting to arms, for in all the warring countries there are great numbers of war-tired citizens ready to aid in any movement for peace through negotiation."

"Other means have been tried. They failed," said the Dean.

"They were not tried with the same vigor, the same sacrifice that we have mobilized in the war. If the same amount of energy, money, organization and labor had been expended in securing a crystallization of the peace sentiment among the nations nothing could have resisted it."

"Your country made the choice. It is up to you to abide by it."

"There are times when the individual must withdraw himself from the state, if he feels his deepest convictions of right and wrong invaded. This is one of those times. I cannot aid in the destruction of life when I feel that no happiness is gained by it,

or no honest cause advanced. There may come an 'ideal' war in which I could throw myself, but this is not one, and I doubt if there has ever been one in all history except the revolt of the slaves. I see in this war only a conflict between two camps of international bankers, seeking wider spheres of influence, and after this war ends I see new alignments of powers, a new scramble for profits, and another war unless the workers—exploited by all governments—fold their arms and refuse to share in it."

The captain's eyes traveled again from my shoes to my face and I caught his angry glance. But the Dean remained impassive.

"I consider you a political objector," he said, "one of those men who believes himself wiser and better informed than any man in the country. That is all."

"He can go, sergeant," said the captain.

I followed the sergeant out of the room into the muddy lane between the tents. . . . Yoder is still praying, comrade, and it is still very quiet except for the rain and his voice.

August 29.—We are poised on the fence, waiting for anything. It may be weeks before the Dean's examination is studied by the war department, and more weeks before we receive word whether we are prison-bound. The dragging days are filled in with the routine of this segregated camp; we volunteer for various clean-up jobs of weed-cutting, or road-mending; we chop wood for the kitchen stoves, and the nights, for all except myself, are filled with prayer and song, and devotional services in the mess-hall after supper. My library of tiny books, hidden in my extra boots, has escaped detection. The tents, I was told, haven't been searched for some weeks, and you would smile, comrade, at the joy I take in forbidden delights—even if so highly respectable as Shakespeare. I have finished "Tempest" and "King Lear," and have found a new savor in them. Especially in the robust hullabaloo of Lear, perhaps because he is so shockingly out of tune with the soft-spoken holiness of the Crusaders.

My eyes failed me in the dim candlelight last night, and I left my books to look in for a moment at the mess-hall which has open, screened walls.

It was crowded with my Mennonite, Christadelphian and Adventist friends, bowing their heads in the half-light shed by a couple of oil lamps, while one of them spoke a prayer that seemed never to end, never to vary in its solemn monotone. As I listened, a man in soldier's uniform came up, and stood next to me, and he took off his hat and bowed his head. I looked at him in astonishment. The prayer at length ended amid a chorus of devout "Amens!" and the soldier next to me added a "praise God!" looking very sad. "Hello," I said. "Hello," he replied. "Why don't you go in and join them?" I asked. "I can't. I feel a little like a traitor," he said soberly. "I belong here. I came as a war objector. But they broke me in the barracks, and I accepted non-com assignment in the hospital. I feel sick in the filthy barracks, and I feel sick here." The prayer meeting was breaking up. The soldier put on his hat and walked swiftly across the field toward the barracks as if he were fleeing from something.

There are other diversions. This morning I was summoned into the captain's office. I have been

told he is a college graduate, and it was, perhaps, to air his logic that he called me. He said he had been thinking about my testimony at the hearing and considered my position not only unwise but unphilosophical. He demonstrated the necessity for war; the impetus it gives to masculine virtues, to art, to poetry, to the soul of a nation. He stressed the biological universality of war, the weapons of offense and defense with which the insect and animal world are accoutered. I listened respectfully. He wound up by offering me an assignment in the base hospital. "You will not even be sent overseas," he said.

I declined respectfully. I thought of the soldier last night, with his "praise God" and his hurried departure for the barracks, doubly tortured because he had accepted both the uniform and the Cross and now could find no peace anywhere. Social pariahs we may be, but it is worse to be an outcast in one's own sight.

It has been raining almost steadily for days. We are all ill-at-ease, dejected and lumpish. Prayers may be helping the Crusaders to remain steadfast, but

they do not inspire brilliance or humor. And King Lear may aid me in routing the army of leaden hours, but he is not a light-hearted companion. Would I had tucked away some tiny volume of Anatole France or Cabell or Shaw in my extra pair of boots. How dreary it is!

. . .

September 1.—A taste of freedom. This is Sunday, and our captain gave us permission to climb the hill behind the camp for devotionals. A Mennonite preacher with long beard and gentle eyes came to camp early in the morning, and we followed him up the wooded slope to a clearing on the hillside. It had stopped raining, but the woods were still wet and redolent, infinitely sweet after the mud of the camp. The Crusaders stopped at the clearing and sat on logs, but I unobtrusively vanished in the shadows and continued to climb high, high up to the very crest of the hill. The sun was pleasant, the woods fragrant, the war seemed very far away; it was as though I were back again in the glen in the Baraboo hills long before mad-

ness came upon the world. Far below the brethren began their hymns:

> "We're marching to Zion,
> Beautiful, beautiful Zion . . ."

But often, when a cicada shrilled, and a thousand crickets contributed their minor bars, even the voices of the choir sounded muted. . . . A mottled, sober old horse shared my freedom. He too seemed to snuff and wheeze luxuriously as he browsed—an army horse, no doubt, free of the traces for a day. And I wondered what damnable power prevented him and me from kicking up our heels and racing over the hilltop to the liberty of distant pastures. He was not hobbled; neither was I, yet I knew he would respond meekly to his master's whistle, and that I, when the hour was up, would as meekly climb down the hill again to resume the yoke . . . as I did. And on the way back I passed the company stockade and my Sunday was spoiled. Thirty prisoners were behind the barbed wire fence, twisting their bodies into calisthenic contortions while a drill sergeant barked commands, "One, two,

three, four! One, two, three, four!" Five men, without uniforms, stood a little to one side. They were war objectors, and refused to obey the sergeant's commands, and for an hour afterward they will continue to stand there, motionless, as punishment. A huge stone slab is stuck into the earth in front of the guardhouse. "158 Depot Brigade Prison 1918" says the inscription. The slab looks like a gravestone, very solemn and white. It seems such a long way from the brigade prison to the top of the hill where horses and men have an hour of joy in the fragrant forest.

. . .

September 2.—The week opens auspiciously. I have made a friend, a whimsical, light-hearted friend as refreshing as rain after a drought. Not that the Christian Crusaders aren't friendly; not that I do not admire their gentleness and courage, but ah, comrade, how dull are the hours filled only with theological dispute and hymn-singing. When not engaged in these pious pursuits they are—most of them—inarticulate shadows in my tent, humor-

less as pulpits. They have given up praying with me, though I believe Yoder still includes me in his prayers and silent meditations by candlelight and I love him for it. Yet I far rather would hear him laugh, and his laugh, I feel, would urge us heavenward much more swiftly and surely than his murmured devotions.

But this morning I heard a laugh, and made a friend. We were whitewashing stones to place around the fringe of lawn and field that separates the camp of war objectors from the soldiers' barracks. We worked quietly, gravely, dipping the stones in buckets of lime, while a corporal sat on his haunches on a grass plot, yawning. Suddenly a boy whom I had not noticed before came toward our group. He had been working on the far end of the lawn. He was very short, wiry, and his one-piece overalls, many sizes too large, hung baggily from his shoulders.

"Corporal," he said snappily, flirting his hand to his cap in mock salute, "we're running out of marshmallows for our lawn party."

"Marshmallows!" asked the corporal.

"Yeah. These white pebbles for our company graveyard."

The corporal grinned.

"All right, Bill," he said amiably. "Bring on another load. Here, you," he added, nodding to me, "you go along and help."

The boy in overalls turned to me. His eyes were bright, pert as a cock-sparrow.

"I'll be glad to help you," I said, "but you're wrong about the lawn party. So far I've found it only a yawn party."

He squinted at me, startled. Then he laughed and put out his hand.

"My name's Davy, Bill Davy," he said, "and I'm tickled to death to salute the first pun I've heard in two months."

He saluted again, soberly. Then he linked his arm in mine and we walked to the stone-pile. It was a joyous discovery. We talked at top speed while we filled the barrow with rocks. He was from Cleveland, a Socialist, a devout friend and admirer of Eugene Debs, and he spoke of Debs with love as "that grand old man with a soul that never had a

'sold' sign tacked on it." "But they're breaking him," he said angrily, "they're mobbing him; and I bet they won't rest till they've locked the good old man in the pen. Well, that's the only place for a sane and honest man anyhow." He explained that although he was a Socialist he had come to camp as a religious objector, being enrolled on the membership list of a Cleveland Congregational church whose pastor, too, had been very radical and anti-war. "And I've been here two months," he sighed, "nearly dying of the woolies. They're giving me the creeps with their eternal hymns and prayer meetings. Oh, boy, can you imagine my joy when my wife came to see me last Sunday and smuggled this into my tent inside a lunch-basket?" He pulled a crumpled magazine from inside his shirt. It was a copy of *The Liberator,* Max Eastman's radical monthly, brimful of revolution. It seemed incredible. For a month I had seen nothing but hymn books and the *Christian Science Monitor.*

I told him of myself. We shook hands again. Comrade, I'm afraid to confess I nearly wept for joy. My isolation is ended. I have found a friend

who can joke, laugh, fill the dreary hours with talk of books and life. He was as happy as I.

"Listen," he said, as we trundled the barrow back to the field, "I'm in a tent with two Mennonites and an Adventist. They're fine boys, but they're driving me cuckoo. The tent is one of the three tents in our outfit that has a floor and a stove, and I suppose I'll have a hard job inducing one of the boys to give up our warm nest for a mudpen. But I'll do it—I have to do it in sheer self-defense. And then you move in, see?"

"I'd love to. But are you sure you can work it?"

"Leave it to my Irish wit," said Bill Davy. "Why, I've even made friends with the corporal—whenever he gets on his ear I tell him the yarn about the Scotchman and the merry-go-round and he eats out of my hand."

For the rest of the afternoon Davy and I worked side by side. A weight has gone from me. As an added happiness on this good day the sun came out; the ditches in front of our brown tents dried and the mists rose from the valley, swirling over the roofs of the barracks across the field. . . . It is after supper

now, and the Crusaders are praying again in the mess-hall, but I can leap across the ditch to Davy's tent and listen to his laughter.

. . .

September 3.—This morning I was detailed to the road gang, very sorry that Davy remained behind. I shoveled gravel from a gravel pit into a wagon; back-breaking work after the first hour, but the sun was warm, and I found I could whistle again. It is pleasant to work outdoors with men and horses. Outdoors the Crusaders became cheerfully human; perhaps because they are a farming people, the Mennonites are depressed more than the ordinary mortal when confined to camp. Working on the roadside they relaxed and laughed; sobriety dropped from them like a dark mantle. We shoveled gravel to the rhythm of a marching hymn, but there was more humor than holiness in the singing. Truckloads of soldiers from camp passed by us on the road; not even their jeers checked our song or our cheerfulness. . . . When I came back to camp this evening I found that I had missed something. Two Y.M.C.A. officials had come to camp. The captain had or-

dered the war objectors to file into the mess-hall for a lecture, and the Y.M.C.A. men had heaped reproaches on the Crusaders' heads for being too Christian and not going to war. The Crusaders, I was told, had accepted the lecture meekly enough, but Bill Davy had arisen and pulled the temple of oratory about their ears. There had been a violent argument, and many curious responses by the Y.M.C.A. gentlemen, who tried to prove by quotation and logic that the Prince of Peace would have shouldered a musket and butchered the Hun to the tune of "The Yanks Are Coming!" . . . And as a final joy this day, Davy came to my tent to-night. "I've worked it," he said. "To-morrow you move into my tent. I shall tell the butler to expect you, my lord."

. . .

September 6.—Bill Davy and I have formed a defensive alliance against the melancholy Mennonites, but it pains me to report that we have been routed. Our tent is crowded with the four cots and the little cone-shaped stove. It is the stove that is the chief cause of our defeat. Almost all of the tents in the Crusaders' colony are unheated; the nights have

been brisk with autumn chill, and the poor fellows are freezing in their wigwams, without even a floor to keep off the ground-damp. Thus, each evening, a great company of Mennonites, Adventists, Christadelphians, Pentecostalites and Plymouth Brethren swarms into our crowded tent to huddle around the stove. They sit on the cots, they squat on the floor, they stand up near the doorway. The air is heavy with the smell of steaming clothes.

Davy and I, crowded into one tiny corner near a kerosene lamp, ambitiously try to read our forbidden books, and suffer in silence. Suffering in silence is endurable, but ah, comrade, it is terrible indeed when the silence is shattered by the bellow of human voices proclaiming the sweetness of salvation. I do not jest at their devotion; I almost envy their fervor—I only wish it were not so prodigiously vocal. And they know so many, many hymns; they are so untiring, have such an amazing capacity for noise.

"Oh, come, come, come, come,
Come to the church in the hollow . . ."

The voices rock the little tent. The force of their devoutness, I swear, stirs up eddies of fetid air that makes the oil lamp flicker, and sends the distorted shadows of the Crusaders wavering across the roof and walls of the tent in fantastic arabesque. Davy and I yearn over our books, and I read in that precious little volume of *Sonnets and Poems* by William Ellery Leonard, which he gave me, you recall, on the day I left for camp, a line or two that gives me faint amusement amid the racket:

"We must be heroes. Earth's old rivers flow,
But earth's religions comfort us no more . . ."

and I wonder whether they were written amid similar volcanic piety which in truth holds little comfort for a sensitive ear. We must be heroes, indeed. . . . Comrade, I do not sneer at my brothers in exile; they have proved their mettle more than I have mine, but they are so inexorably, robustly boisterous in their bravery.

"Life is like a mountain railroad . . ." they sing, and the railroad rattles precariously on the high notes, but roars to a triumphant refrain. Davy slips

his *Liberator* under the pillow, and cries into my ear: "Can you stand any more?" I shake my head and put away my book, and we put on our coats and climb out of the tent over the shoulders of the floor-squatters. The air outdoors is brisk and clear. We walk up and down the road between the tent rows, drawing deep breaths.

"Do you know, duke," says Davy dejectedly, jamming his chilled hands deep into his coat pockets, "when we're sent to Leavenworth with the psalm-singers I'm going to break every rule in the place and spend the rest of my life in solitary confinement. I hear they have a dungeon deep, deep down in the ground, where it is so dark and quiet that you can hear your thoughts rattle like peas in a pod. Can there be silence anywhere in the world, duke? Listen!"

Lusty voices float from the tent:

"God will take care of you,
For all the way, through all the day,
He will take care of you,
He will take care, take care of you . . ."

We walk up and down till we are weary, reluctant to surrender. Then I say:

"We are stupid. We must obey biological necessity and adapt ourselves to our environment."

"What do you mean?"

"We must sing."

Davy blinks at me.

"By golly, your honor, I never thought of that."

So we climb into the tent again, and bellow with the boys till the lamp-chimney quivers. Davy's rumpled cap is pulled over his eyes. He lifts his face to the tent peak and squeals an atrocious tenor. His thin, comical face looks almost Mephistophelian in the midst of the whiskered gravity of the Mennonites. At length everybody is hoarse or exhausted; the hymn singing ends, and the Crusaders plunge into prayer and theological dispute. Later they leave the stove reluctantly and go back to their frosty tents. We blow out the lamp and crawl into our cots. In an hour the stove goes out. The chill air blows through holes in the canvas and seeps upward through the floor and we turn and twist in our

cold cots. We have no bed-ticks. We sleep on top of a thick layer of *Christian Science Monitors,* the only paper that is delivered to the c. o. camp. I awake often during the night and hear the crackling of newspapers as the Crusaders shift their cramped, cold limbs in troubled sleep.

. . .

September 8.—Sunday, and the hillside again with the deep shadows and shreds of sunshine, the trellis work of branches and hanging vines against the sky, and the inevitable "We Are Marching to Zion" of the Mennonite choir down the slope. The choir has the upper hand to-day, for the crickets are subdued; many of them died during the cold nights this week, and the cicadas are buried in the frost. Davy is with me to-day, reading—of all things—my tiny volume of *Sonnets from the Portuguese.* Davy, you know, has never gone beyond graded school; he is twenty-five and has worked at many jobs, but somewhere he has acquired a love of literature. He had never read Shakespeare—lucky fellow—and so never had his love for the lusty bard ruined by high

school pedagogues. I gave him "Tempest" and Lear," which he accepted gingerly as "high-brow twaddle," but he has read them with zest and joy, interrupting me often with great phrases of the mad king and Caliban which he repeats with the joy of a discoverer. . . . And now he is deep in the lyrics of Mrs. Browning. A moment ago we were interrupted by two negro soldiers who had straggled up the hill. They stopped, thinking we were farmer boys, and chatted about camp. "The worst part about camp," said one of them, "is that there ain't no skirts," and he added an obscene sentence that made my friend's eyes snap. He rose to his feet. "Beat it!" he cried. "We had all we want from you." The soldiers, strangely, took no apparent offense and slouched away up the hill. Davy turned to me, puzzled.

"Wonder what's happened to me, duke," he laughed. "You gave me Shakespeare and it made me high-brow. Now you give me these sonnets and they make me pure. But honest, duke," he pleaded apologetically, "after reading these beautiful poems, hearing those yaps was just like falling from a mountain

into a pile of manure." . . . How I like this Socialist scamp, comrade. If we are prison-bound, I pray we go together.

. . .

September 9.—Through an odd meeting this morning I learned that I was slated for prison. Don't wince, comrade. We have braced ourselves for the ordeal, having faced it since I left for camp, and we will meet it calmly. The news came as a blow, of course, but whatever distress I felt has been replaced by a feeling of confidence and a bit of relief that uncertainty is ended. There will be friends in Leavenworth.

This morning, as Davy and I were standing in front of our tent, an officer, walking from the captain's office, glanced at me. He stopped, looked at me fixedly and came over to me. We recognized each other. He was Felton, a classmate way back in high school. I almost held out my hand, but remembering the moral breach between a soldier in captain's uniform and a yellowback in dirty overalls I only smiled and said I was glad to see him.

"Do you mean to say," he exclaimed, "that you belong to this c. o. outfit?"

"I do."

"Then I can't say that I'm glad to see you," he said sharply. "You're a damn fool. If you'll get into the game, you'll be home inside of a few months—we'll be marching into Berlin before winter. And you'll be respected when you get back. I hate to think of a classmate of mine in this lousy place."

"I feel quite happy here, Felton," I said.

"Wait here a moment."

He turned and retraced his steps to the captain's office. In a few minutes he came back and called me aside.

"Your Captain Hough and I are friends," he said, "and I came here on a personal visit. I have just spoken to him about you. He went over your record and he assures me that you are bound for Leavenworth."

"I expected that."

"But he added that you still have a chance. You can accept non-combatant service—there's still time,

he said—and it will be all right. Come, don't be ridiculous."

"Felton," I replied, "I'd no more think of swapping my overalls for your uniform than you would consider moving into our colony."

"You are merely being pig-headed."

"Perhaps. But I really think you'd like me less if I backed out now. Since I've come to camp, I've been offered hospital and quartermaster service a half dozen times, and refused it. Wouldn't you consider me rather a worm if I'd accept a uniform now that I know Leavenworth is waiting for me?"

"I can't see your point of view at all. I remember you as a promising fellow. You are ruining your future. I hope you reconsider before taking a step you will regret all your life."

I shook my head, and he left without further word. I walked back to the tent and Davy. I told Davy of our conversation. He looked morose for only a second, then he cackled an ironical laugh.

"Leavenworth?" he cried. "I salute you, duke. You will meet distinguished guests in the disciplinary barracks. I hope we go together, pard. But if we

don't, and I'm on the outside, I swear I'll climb the prison wall and toss you bon-bons through the bars."

. . .

September 10.—They called for volunteers to-day to shovel manure on a farm two miles outside of camp, and a dozen of us responded. Far from being offensive, the work was delightful after the stagnation of the camp. Laugh at me, comrade, but I tell you there is something honest and vital in the pungency of a barnyard. The day was crisp and hazy. The base of the hill to the east was shrouded in mist, and Camp Sherman was out of sight. And almost out of mind. We had slipped a tether for a few hours, and exulted in our freedom. A line of wagons laden with manure came down the road, and Davy and I and two other boys climbed into them when they reached the broad field, and we labored with pitch-forks until sun-down. I came back to the tent, wholesomely weary, ravenous and quite light-hearted. Are we so wedded to the grindstone that a little labor will bring release and rout despondency? I almost feel that prison will be endurable with

labor as an anodyne, and that freedom, with nothing to do but brood darkly, would drive one sooner to madness. . . . Davy is already snoring in his cot. And the Mennonite tent-mates are so weary that they gave up, for to-night, their evening hymn-singing. An excellent end for a good day.

. . .

September 12.—This morning, after we were lined up, we were given the opportunity of hearing a patriotic address by Governor Cox, who was a visitor at Camp Sherman. We elected, instead, to go out and shovel manure.

. . .

September 13.—And this is Friday, too. Is there a fatalism in the dreaded combination? Well, partly. As an unlucky item there is this: all but fourteen of the Crusaders' camp have been called into the captain's office to sign application blanks for farm furloughs, the report from Washington having at last come through. Davy was one of them, but I was not. Which means, perhaps, court martial and

Leavenworth. Which means, definitely, that Davy and I will be separated. That is hard. On the other hand, this day has not been without brightness, for your good letter came, comrade, and the package of books—which, heaven be thanked, were approved by the sergeant censor. Shaw, the *Dial,* the *Nation, Pearson's Magazine*—ah, how Davy and I crowed for joy as each new jewel came to light. And then—more good fortune—a telegram from Helen saying that she will pass through Chillicothe on her way east and will try to see me in camp. These things have blotted, for a time, the thought of everything but the delight of a friendly book, a friendly face and your kindness. The future seems very far away.

. . .

September 15.—This is Sunday night and the end of a good day, even if prison is right around the corner. For Helen came, comrade, and with her a bracing, clean wind from the world outside of our colony that has left me exhilarated and joyful. When she arrived I went with her to the captain's

office and asked whether she and I and Davy might climb the hill back of our camp for a few hours' leave. Captain Hough was strangely kind; if ever I meet him "afterwards" I shall want to thank him for his gift of these golden moments to-day. . . . We left the gloomy Crusaders' tents behind and climbed the muddy trail to the hill. Davy was in prime spirits; never had his cap been twisted to more rakish a peak, never had his tongue raced more devilishly or his eyes been more alive with waggishness. . . . We climbed to the crest, and Helen spread out the picnic lunch she had brought with her, and the little woods that in the morning had echoed the sober prayers and voices of the Mennonite hymn-singers now rang to our laughter, and it was good to laugh in the mist that swirled up the hillside. It began to rain; the drops tinkled on the crisp autumn leaves; a fragrance rose from the loam, so overpoweringly sweet that I longed to take root in the black soil and cling to the hill through all the gay seasons.

What matter if it rained—what matter anything? The magic of Helen's talk carried me back to you,

comrade, and to the lakes and the skies and the friendship of Madison. She talked of you, and of her brother, who was court-martialed in Atlanta as a political war objector and whom I will probably see in Leavenworth. She talked of Parfrey's Glen in the Baraboo hills and I remembered with a pang that dear refuge from a fretful world—do you recall how its little waterfall, its springs and pines and musky caves stole over us like a benediction when we entered the quiet sanctuary so far removed from the world of clashing swords and death? Once more I was carried back there; once more I slept on the balsam bed under the pines with the moon looking through the canopy of the gorge and the monotone of the water voices a whisper in our ears. . . . All these sights and sounds and feelings I recaptured while Helen talked of the sweet world, and yet below them lurked the nagging thought that in an hour it would be over, in an hour Davy and I would climb down the hill again and walk like ghosts into the ghostly row of tents, brown and wet in the rain. But the camp was mercifully invisible. Mist filled the wide valley, churned by gusts that fanned our

cheeks like a moist breath, and a chill crept into the air. Then bugles blew somewhere in the vapor, ominous as the cock-crow that ends the revel of the dead in "Danse Macabre." A little saddened, a little frightened at the nearness of the war, we gathered up our things and walked down through the wet underbrush. Yes, there was the camp again, the rows upon rows of barracks, realities that the witchery of the swift hours on the hill had not made vanish. . . . Helen is gone again; a cab came for her from Chillicothe. She laughed good-by, and Davy and I laughed back, but when he and I crossed the muddy ditch to our tent and entered to find a dozen Crusaders drying their clothes around the stove it seemed that a light had gone out. But the sadness is gone again, comrade. I have the book from you that Helen brought me—the calmness and the fine heresy of Thoreau are a tonic this night.

* * *

September 17.—It is very late, very quiet. Davy and I have been sitting in the dark, talking, on our last night together. He leaves to-morrow, with most

of the other Crusaders, to work on a West Virginia farm. I have given him, with your love, that little copy of "King Lear." He has, oddly, formed an attachment for the King—a "ruined pipe-organ, or a spiked cannon," he called the mad monarch. So he leaves to-morrow with a pocketful of tragedy. It is hard to see him go.

September 18.—Our colony is wrecked. Almost all of the tents have been pulled down and most of the Crusaders have left to work out their expiation behind the plow. With them has gone Davy. When I last saw him his short legs were bending under a burden of bed swaddling, a suit case and a pack of magazines, and he was too depressed to joke. They are shipping the religionists to West Virginia because the Ohio farmers, I hear, are up in arms against the "yellowbacks." Our captain, I was told, recently received a telegram from Fulton county, Ohio, signed by the draft board which said that "The League of American Patriots" was aroused at the furlough of Mennonites and threatened mob

violence if the boys weren't recalled to camp. So Davy and the Crusaders are off to West Virginia, and the handful who are left are in low spirits. We wait, wait, wait. My tent is thronged with a dozen glum figures. I have made the acquaintance of Garrett, a Quaker, who is leaving soon with the Friends' Reconstruction Unit for France. He is a college grad, earnest, quiet. He told me of the Quakers' work among the civilian war victims in the ruined towns, and won my admiration and enthusiasm. I could, I feel, join them and work whole-heartedly for the Unit. But there are barricades and red tape hard to vault. There is, besides, Leavenworth. This week, I hear, fourteen of us are to be taken there. . . . We huddle around the stove, talking and speculating, and time hangs like a dead weight.

. . .

September 24.—We are packed up and ready to start for Leavenworth. Fearing that my baggage will be searched for books, I have hidden my tiny volumes in various pockets, shirts, and in my extra shoes, and hope to smuggle them in along with your

letters, comrade. It is bright and cheerful to-day. We are in good spirits.

St. Louis, Missouri, September 25.—A short stop on the way to Fort Leavenworth. My thirteen Mennonite fellow prisoners are grouped at the forward end of this day coach, lustily singing a hymn. At the back of the coach are a score of negroes in ragged civilian clothes. They were rejected at the camp as physically unfit and are now singing and skylarking like children on a holiday. I mark the curious contrast in voices and song: the negroes led by a pock-marked cotton-picker in a black shirt, are raising a din with a Rabelaisian army ditty, while the religious choir up ahead is nobly concentrating on "We're Marching to Zion." Was ever such a mad freight gathered together in one car—holiness and hilarity under one roof, roaring on through the night? . . . What a fantastic night it was, comrade. The moon was brilliant; trees and houses sailed by so cleanly etched against the sky that they seemed black paper cut-outs unwinding from an endless

roll. Once on a barren field I saw a dozen moving flares, like torches, and I thought of the Klan and southern lynching bees. Trees and towns and rivers and wide fields washed by moonlight; all the lovely panorama of freedom and space left behind while we clattered on. To prison . . . to prison . . . to prison, said the hypnotic cadence of the rails. The negroes snored on the back seats; the Crusaders gave up their songs, and only the murmur of a prayer by Yoder, across the aisle, came from the solemn forms in the dimmed light. . . . I slept little, sitting up in my seat through the endless night, yet the memory of the journey is already faded as if I had been drugged by strong opiate. . . . To-day all is clear again; dawn has heartened us, and we go forward singing. We are under guard. Have you visions of a squad of heavy-jowled fellows with guns and bayonets? No, it is only our little sergeant, with revolver at hip. He laughs and jests with us. He is swayed by contempt and pity, and his pity seems to increase as we near the end of our journey. To our inquiries of what will happen in Leavenworth he shrugs his shoulders—truthfully, for he knows as

little about our destiny as we do. . . . I shall toss this note out of the window at a wayside station and with it my doubts and fears. . . . The Mennonite singers have swung into another hymn. The negroes are roaring: "The Yanks Are Coming." Whatever else the day holds, comrade, there is humor even in the depths. I cling to it, and to the thought of you, for comfort and strength.

. . .

Kansas City, Missouri, September 25.—Two hours' stop-over while we wait for a train to Leavenworth. I am writing this seated on the edge of the stone viaduct that leads from the great Union station over the submerged network of tracks. Our guard, the sergeant, has remained in the station, ogling a girl who is handing out coffee and doughnuts to the rookies bound for camps. He gave us permission to wander around town and return within two hours. What is to prevent me from losing myself in the crowded streets, dropping out of sight till the great madness is over? Nothing—and everything. And yet this passing taste of liberty is dangerously sweet.

I saw the ranchers fresh from the west, in high boots and sombreros, coming to sell their carloads of cattle on the Kansas City markets. There was a vigor in their walk, a breeziness in their laughter that stirred me with memories of the western mountains and plains that I had walked six years ago and that now seemed so unutterably far away. There was such a gulf between these ranchers and the sorry folk I saw this morning. Just before reaching Jefferson City our train passed the hateful walls of the state penitentiary, a dirty building surrounded by high walls with corner towers manned by guards. The walls rise up very close to the rail tracks, and a few of the pitiful inmates peered out of the windows and waved through the bars. What savage hatred mankind heaps upon its unfortunates. And just beyond the prison loomed the white dome of the capitol where righteous people make righteous laws. . . . I must go back now to join the sergeant and my fellow prisoners. We reach Leavenworth to-night.

FORT LEAVENWORTH

Trial by Darkness

FORT LEAVENWORTH

Trial by Darkness

Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, September 26, 1918.—It is 6:30 in the morning. We are locked up in a great, rectangular cell, fourteen of us. The floor is cold concrete. The bars are thick as broomsticks. The lock on the grated door is enormous, and the keyhole in the lock is two inches long and broad as my thumb. The lock is turned. We are caged like dangerous tigers in the guardhouse of Fort Leavenworth. I told you, comrade, I would cling to my humor whatever befell, and I find material for laughter in this: these non-resisting Christians who would not harm a hair of their enemy's head or break a cherry crate to escape their persecutors, are locked behind iron bars with the murderer, the degenerate and the insane, as if their prayers could topple kingdoms and their limbs contaminate a world. Tigers? Behold them. Yoder, looking sol-

emnly ridiculous in rumpled underwear, is kneeling at the side of his cot, his face buried in his hands, murmuring an unheard prayer. Pierson is whistling to himself; he is more light-hearted than the rest. Sinks, very pale, is again looking at his cheap watch which fell on the stone floor from under his head when he awoke in great fright this morning as the sound of metallic clatter filled our cell. The racket was the noise of the turnkey's reveille—achieved by drawing his enormous key across the bars of the cell —and it aroused us after a night of half-wakeful nightmares.

The rest of the thirteen are lying on their canvas cots, silent, oppressed, some of them burrowing their faces in their arms as if to shut out the sight of our cage, dimly illuminated by a light in the corridor. But I can write, thanks to the kindness of the warden who took away my knife and books but left me my pencil and pad of paper. And in writing I escape the awful weight of the hours; yes, I escape even the cage itself, for it brings me close to you, comrade, and to the woods and lakes of our home, now doubly dear. If Yoder, praying there by his cot,

is brought nearer to his Shepherd by his devotions, I am brought nearer to the green pastures by my memory—and so we both escape, and the turnkey is thwarted, for his cage holds only our poor bodies, while our spirit, our fancy (whatever you may call it), goes winging to beautiful, far ports. This is our triumph, comrade; we are never truly fettered.

The fort was dark when we arrived last night at 10:30. We left the train, bowing under our duffle bags, and filed along a gravel path leading through a park. Reversing the more popular quest, we searched for an entrance to prison. Our guard, the good sergeant, was as unfamiliar with the grounds as we were, and we aided cheerfully in scouting for the dreaded goal. At length, in the darkness, we came to a great wall on which at intervals loomed turrets mounted with brilliant searchlights that swept the crest of the brick barricade. A dog barked loudly somewhere. Sentries popped out of the turret directly overhead and in response to a query by our sergeant shouted directions. We marched silently around the base of the wall. Looking up we saw

barred windows, a number of which framed white and motionless forms. We came to a great arched gateway, also heavily barred. We were let into a narrow, separate section of the great gate by a keeper provided with an enormous key. We waited, crushed and wordless, while the sergeant conferred with an official in the office. Our relief was great when the sergeant returned with word that we were not to be kept here in the execrated "Disciplinary Barracks," but were to go up the road to the guardhouse.

The huge gate clanged behind us again; the night air tasted sweet, but only for a moment. We reached the guardhouse, a long, low brick building with a broad veranda. The sleepy turnkey admitted us to an office. We were thoroughly searched. My Mennonite friends pleaded for their Bibles. The turnkey looked doubtful, muttering something about orders. "Come, let them have their Bibles," urged our good friend, the sergeant. "I have come with these boys all the way from Camp Sherman and spent two days with them. They have not tried to kill me with their Bibles." The turnkey laughed and consented. "And may I keep my paper and pencil?" I asked.

"I promise not to saw my way out of the cell with the pencil." This, too, he allowed; he was bald, thin, amiable; the ominous keys that he jangled from a great ring and his affected severity seemed out of keeping, as if a greengrocer walked abroad growling like Cerberus. He took us first up a narrow flight of stairs to a lavatory; we washed, and were then led to our cell. We had been expected. Fourteen cots were in the cell.

"Here you are, boys," said the turnkey, as we filed in.

The iron door closed behind us with a crash. I confess, comrade, that at the sound humor fled for a space. It seemed as if the iron door had been dropped upon my body, suffocating me. Every thought and feeling vanished except an unutterable sense of pressure and helplessness, such as I had once experienced in swimming against a river current and finding myself gripped suddenly by strong and unfriendly powers. There was a giddiness and an inward sinking. I read the same dread in the faces of my thirteen friends; we looked at each other and at the cell in fearful silence.

The tension was broken by the sergeant. He had come up the stairs to say good-by. Amazing tears were sliding down his cheeks. I shall always remember the sergeant's tears—a soldier crying! He reached his hand through the bars and we shook it one by one. Then Pierson cried:

"Let's sing!"

Fear slipped from us like a noose untied.

"Good!" agreed Sinks. "And I know the right song."

"What is it, brother?"

" 'For This Is Like Heaven to Me.' "

There was laughter, a little hysterical. And then we stood in the middle of the cell and sang with all our power the old hymn. Our voices echoed in the empty corridors and seemed to rebound metallically from the stone walls. The turnkey came shuffling up the stairs and lifted his hand that still held the ring of keys.

"Boys, boys!" he cried, alarmed.

"Oh, let them sing," said our sergeant. "They may not have long to enjoy themselves."

We roared the second verse. The turnkey stood

by, his bald head creased with worry. Our sergeant walked down the stairs, waving his hand in last good-by.

Whatever malicious things I have said about the psalm-singers I take back, for that hymn in the iron cage sent the blood again to our fainting hearts and gave us a moment almost joyous. The bars and the twilight of prison are bad, but the silence is more frightening, more crushing than the thick walls. So I joined with enthusiasm in the singing, forgetting my hatred of the voices that had driven me mad in the noisy holiness of the Crusaders' colony. We started another song: "We're Marching to Zion," but before we had achieved a verse the silence of the bottom corridor was shattered by the sound of whistling, boos and cat-calls. I may not have mentioned that our cell is really a cage within a cage; there is an open space all around it between the bars and the walls of the guardhouse. It is, also, a double-tiered cell. We are quartered on the top tier, and the yells came from the prisoners in the tier below. "Pipe down!" hooted a voice. "Pipe down, you

Bible-bangers, we want to sleep." "You said it," yelled another. "They'll sing a different tune after a week in the hole."[1]

We became quiet. The turnkey, meanwhile, had vanished. But while we were preparing for bed a prisoner walked up the stone steps from the office, where he was employed as orderly. He was dressed in a rough blue shirt and brown pants with a num-

[1] It was not until later that I learned of the "hole" in the Fort Leavenworth disciplinary barracks and its strange uses. In October, 1918, just a month after the date of the present narrative, a number of Molokans were brought to the fort. The Molokans are Russian "absolutists" who will obey no military order and who for centuries have endured persecution in many lands for their Christian, non-resisting creed. When they were brought to prison, says Norman Thomas in his book on the conscientious objector, they refused to work under military orders and were at once put in solitary confinement in the "hole." They were manacled nine hours a day, in standing posture, to the bars of this dungeon, and at the end of nine hours each day their bonds were unlocked and they fell exhausted to the cement floor. They slept on a plank on the floor, which was crawling with vermin. The Molokans were kept in the "hole" continuously, and every alternate two weeks they were given a diet of bread and water. They could not receive or send letters. Their fate at length became known to the other war objectors in the prison, who drew up a protest to the war department, but prison officials refused to allow this protest to be mailed.

Then, on November 2, Evan Thomas, a war objector and a brother of Norman Thomas, went to the commandant, Colonel Sedgwick Rice, and announced that as a protest he, too, would refuse work. He was immediately put into the "hole," where he stayed seven weeks. He was later joined by several other war objectors, and the solitary cells became crowded. To keep from going mad, the prisoners broke the silence rule and called to each other through the stone

ber painted on each leg. There was something of an apparition in his appearance; he was a strangely pale youth and, I swear, the most beautiful I had seen in all my life. He had black hair, and his large, dark eyes looked out of the pallor of a face exquisitely chiseled. In the half-lit corridor, and against the background of stone and steel, he looked fantastical as a delicate tea-cup. Can you imagine then, my amazement when he spoke to us in a voice

walls. Two of them were punished by being manacled with their backs to the bars of the cell, but at length even the guards revolted at the brutality and would no longer report infractions of the silence rule. News of the "hole" got out. On December 6, the war department abolished manacling, and at Christmas the men were all taken out of solitary and placed in a special stockade. The order, however, came too late to save the lives of the Hofer brothers. The three Hofer brothers and Jacob Wipf, members of the Huttrians, an anti-war sect, were first sent to Alcatraz Island, a prison in San Francisco Bay. There they were put in a dungeon below the surface of the water. It was pitch black. Water dripped from the walls. Clad only in their underwear and tortured by a strait-jacket and ball and chain, these four Christians were kept in the dungeon five days, spending thirty-six of the hours manacled to the bars. After five days they were transferred to Leavenworth and again placed in solitary. Two of them contracted pneumonia and were transferred to the prison hospital, where they died. As a final irony, the body of one of the men, who had suffered horror and death rather than be untrue to his faith, was sent back to his people dressed in a military uniform. Irony, however, sometimes has a double edge. While Howard Moore, a war objector, was chained to the bars of the "hole" in Leavenworth as a slacker and "yellowback," word came to the prison that he had been awarded a Carnegie medal for bravery in rescuing a woman from drowning at the risk of his own life.

as musical as a young girl's—but in a language so obscene that it would shame the vocabulary of a hack-driver? The Crusaders shrank back as from a plague, but I beckoned this weird boy to a corner of the cell and spoke to him between the bars.

"What are you in for?" I asked.

"Insubordination. Twenty-five years. I was bumped off by a sniveling first loot for calling him a bastard. And when I was court-martialed they charged me with everything but rape. They tore that page out of the book and threw the book at me."

"Where do you come from?"

"Oklahoma. That's God's country, but God didn't stay there long enough to finish it."

"These men in the cell down below us," I asked. "What are they in for?"

"Murder," said the boy. "They belong in the Disciplinary Barracks, but they were transferred to the guardhouse here the other day to be held as witnesses in a murder case. The murder happened right there in the disciplinary barracks. There was a gang of prisoners violating rules—they'd sneak to-

bacco in their shoes and such things—and one of them peached to the guard. The damn fool thought he'd get strong with the commandant. Well, they found this stool-pigeon dead in the corridor with his skull broken—bashed in by a dozen heels as if a whole gang had jumped on his head."

My scalp tingled at the horror of the picture and his callousness. Then he begged a cigarette, and not getting one he walked down the corridor with little, dancing steps, a beautiful moth in the twilight. The prisoners below had stopped their noise, and it was deathly still now.

And that stillness, comrade, crept like a live thing through the corridors. Prison silence is not like the silence of the woods, where each little rustle, each little breaking twig is the record of the passing of some free bird or beast; for every tiny noise within these walls drives home with cruel force the fact of our captivity. They are all furtive and metallic. A distant door grates on iron hinges. A heel scrapes on the stone floor. A bolt slides raspily into its socket. . . . These were the little sounds that came out of

the darkness around our cage as we lay wakeful in our cots.

Wakeful so long. The Crusaders turned restlessly on their beds, whispering now and then to each other. Pierson, the Pentecostalite, who believes in mysterious "voices of the spirit," lay next to me, silent, and I wondered if he were waiting confidently for his angels to cleave through the stone walls and murmur devout messages into his ears. I wondered what hopes and dreams were bracing the others in this hour. In prison a man lives inwardly, drawing life from the storehouse of his past, and if his past has been rich with friendship, study and the out-of-doors, his memory will sustain him through many long hours in the dark and silence. So, at least, I thought as I lay awake and let my fancy wing homeward to perch at last tranquilly on your shoulder, comrade. How clearly I saw you, and the garden behind our house, and the crest of Castle Rock where we looked down at a drowsing village and the shadowy waves of the blowing wheat. I saw the glen and its hoary rocks again, the bay of shells in Mendota, the reeds dipping delicate

tips into the Wingra marshes, the spring rich with watercress—the thousand and one delights that we harvested in all seasons. I did not dream, then, that I should ever draw upon this storehouse for strength; and yet I must have had some premonition, for how else could I have been guilty of such miserliness? Sounds and sights and fragrances that I thought long forgotten came back again as I plucked them from my hoard, and with them came back faces, voices, songs:

> "Ich ging einmal spazieren,
> Ah-hm! Ah-hm!"

I hummed the old melody delightedly, recalling Dr. Ernst Feise, his guitar, his rich tenor, and a full-moon night on a canoe under Eagle Heights. Pierson must have heard me, for he turned in his cot and his voice came out of the dark:

"What's the matter? Are you crying?"

"No," I said, "I'm laughing."

"It's a long night."

"It is. The longest I've ever known. Have you heard your 'voices' yet, Pierson?"

"No. But they will come."

"I have been luckier. I've heard voices."

"God's voice?" he asked solemnly.

"No, just a friend's. But it was just as wonderful."

"I wish they would stop snoring," he said. "It's driving me crazy."

And then I became aware of the sound of men snoring in the cell below us. The prisoners down there were not lying awake as we were. Marvelous how men can adjust themselves and survive; they have learned to surrender, and do not beat themselves against the walls of their cage like a wild bird till they die. . . . The sound of the prisoners' slumber was the last thing I recall before I fell into restless sleep. I awoke often, feeling the cold of the bars and the stone floor as a presence in the cell, a distinct, frozen shadow in the night. And when dawn wavered through the barred windows the memories that had sustained me in the dark fled—the visible reality of the bars and iron door in the dim light were too stark and terrible. I shut my eyes against them and turned face downward, and a chill slid through me. . . . How glad I was when the dreadful spell was broken by the rattle of the

turnkey's huge key against the bars and the sound of his voice: "Everybody out, boys." And I took comfort, I am ashamed to say, in the fright of Sinks, who leaped from his cot with such terrified haste that his watch slid from under his pillow and crashed to the floor, where it lay in fragments. The picture of Sinks, in his underclothes, sighing over his ruined time-piece, routed our wretchedness; he finally joined in our laughter.

"It stopped at three minutes past six," he said. "I shall keep it this way till I die, just to remember this night."

And since then, comrade, except for the interval of breakfast, I have been writing and writing. We were taken to a mess-hall, ten steps down the corridor, for a breakfast of sausage, prunes, oatmeal and coffee, and then led back to our cage. In our absence the prison chaplain left a handful of Bible tracts on our cots, forgetting, perhaps, that it was their curious, literal belief in the Bible that caused the Crusaders to oppose war and be dragged off to prison. Is not the chaplain aiding Satan's seditiousness in passing out such an unpatriotic document? Is he——

The dash, comrade, represents a glorious interruption. At that point the sergeant who had brought us from Camp Sherman came up the stairs. We had not thought to see him again.

"Boys," he said happily. "Good news!"

We crowded to the barred door.

"You are not to stay in Leavenworth. I've just received orders to take you on the next train to Fort Riley."

Ah, how the stone and the steel seemed to vanish.

"Hallelujah!" cried Pierson.

"Hallelujah. God be praised!" cried the Crusaders.

The sergeant went in search of the turnkey.

"A song, boys!" exclaimed someone.

The Crusaders formed a circle.

"We're marching to Zion,
Beautiful, beautiful Zion . . ."

Their voices echoed again, joyously, triumphantly, in the guardhouse corridors as the turnkey came up rattling his keys, a smile on his kindly face.

FORT RILEY

Trial by Military

FORT RILEY

Trial by Military

Fort Riley, Kansas, September 28, 1918.—This old army outpost in the Kansas plains is an architectural projection of the military mind. It is rigid, rectangular, cold, and hard as steel. The stone barracks, a score of them, frown on the parade ground, a discouraged patch of sand and grass between the gray buildings. Behind the barracks range officers' dwellings and long lines of cavalry stables, now dark and deserted. On all sides of this fort the plains roll away to the horizon; from behind one of those distant and beautiful hills comes the uninterrupted rattle of machine guns and the louder thud of smaller artillery on the firing range, like the strum of a plucked piano wire. The fort, thus isolated in the prairies, draws into itself, moody and irritable. In the new army cantonments there is a certain restlessness and vigor, a stirring about and uncer-

tainty, but here all elements have congealed into ancient military rituals both of mind and body—everything is hard and fast, snobbish, cold-blooded and savage.

Can you imagine then, comrade, how the pacifist Crusaders fit into this scheme of things? There are some two hundred of us here; we are incomprehensible to the military mind and more hated than scorpions. I do not know, but I strongly suspect that it was the amiable intention of the war department to segregate as many war objectors as possible in an army post like this so that we might feel the full pressure of the mailed gauntlet. From the stories I heard to-day I know that the lash has not been spared. Added to the Mennonites, Molokans, Adventists, Christadelphians, International Bible Students and a dozen other creeds which the Crusaders represent, there are segregated in Fort Riley a different breed that has borne the brunt of the torture: the Socialists, I.W.W.'s and other political heretics. They are not meek, like the religionists; they do not turn the other cheek. They are upstanding, militant; they irk the fort commandant more than white-hot

goads, and he has used everything short of murder to break their spirit. . . . But I shall tell you more of that later.

My thirteen Christian friends and I arrived here last night from Fort Leavenworth. Our removal from the prison cage came as a deliverance for which we are still singing pæans, and yet only a few hours convinced us that we had only leaped from the fire into the frying pan. However terrible prison may have been, there was yet the one little consolation that we were at the bottom, that things could get no worse, and here we are again assailed by uncertainty, with our fate no more clearly defined than it was on my first day in camp two months ago.

We slept in a stone barracks populated only by war objectors and guarded by sergeants and a lieutenant who run things with iron discipline. After breakfast this morning we were assembled and marched across the parade ground to the fort headquarters, overlooking a deep valley. The hollow was a rolling carpet of mist. Behind the churning film rattled the machine guns, and when the fog later

lifted we could see soldiers in skirmish line, and lines of earthwork that concealed the guns.

We were lined up in front of the headquarters veranda, where Major Kellogg, a member of the president's board to try war objectors, was to hold court. The major and his aides arrived and sat around a long table and we were led, singly, before the trial board. It was tedious work. The hours passed. The sun came out and beat down on us hotly while we waited, standing up. Meanwhile our ranks were swelled by a group of about thirty from the guardhouse, including a dozen strange, bearded Molokans from a religious colony in Arizona. And soon, under heavy guard, came the Socialists and other radicals from the "tent colony" in the misty valley. I edged over to this group. As the hours wore on discipline was relaxed a little, and I was enabled to speak to them. I met Charles Larson, John Downey, F. X. Hennessey, Earling Lunde, Howard Moore, Morris Franklin and Ulysses de Rosa, and Evan Thomas. Strange stories they whispered to me: of fourteen-day hunger strikes, of collapse and forcible feeding at the hospital, resuscitation and hunger strikes again. This was their answer to the

attempts of the fort to make them military men. The commandant had marched them out into the open field in the hot plains, and had given them tents and raw food but no stove, and had tried to break down their morale by isolation and contempt. They demanded court-martial, settlement of their cases and the end of the silly game, and to bring matters to a head went on the hunger strike.

On August 25th, just a month ago, seven of the radicals were removed from the tent colony and put in an iron cage in the basement of the fort guard-house. Next day three of them, Kaplan, Breger and Hennessey, were taken out of the cage. A rope was tied around their necks, and the other end of the rope was looped through a railing in the upper tier of cells. The three were then hoisted off their feet until they turned purple and were at the point of collapse. The rope was then removed and the men fell to their knees. Then guards brought in a hose, and a stream of icy water was played on them till they became unconscious. They were then carried downstairs and dumped into the cage again, where their comrades unclothed and dried them and nursed them back to life.

These were the stories that were whispered to me while we waited in the sun for Major Kellogg to dispose of our fates. Back of the tales I could sense the bafflement of the military post which in all its long history, I suppose, had met with no such amazing mutiny that even the guardhouse and the noose could not curb. In their eyes we were maniacal and leprous, and I know that if he were not hampered by regulations, Colonel Waterman, the fort commandant, would have considered it the act of a patriot and gentleman to have us lined in front of the guardhouse wall and shot. I know it because I kept my eyes on the colonel. While we waited for our trials, he walked up and down before our ragged ranks. He was slapping a riding crop against his leather puttees, and every time he looked at us the lids of his eyes drooped, his brows knotted and his face turned a dull brick-red. I am afraid, comrade, the colonel does not love us.

One o'clock dragged around. We were still waiting for Major Kellogg to summon us before the tribunal on the porch of the fort headquarters. Less

than half of the three hundred war objectors had been tried. The sun was hot, and our legs were weary. And then the major himself, handsome as a recruiting poster, came down from the porch followed by his staff, six dramatic ramrods. The major ordered us assembled in a great ring on the parched lawn. A disreputable ring we were, slovenly sweating—dusty sheep huddling under a storm cloud. The dozen whiskered Molokans from Arizona stood dazed as if the lightning had already struck.

"Men," announced the major, "I come here not as your friend, for I do not believe in your ideas. Neither do I come as your enemy. I am here to interpret the law and to answer questions. There has been much trouble in Fort Riley from the activities of some of you, and before going on with the hearings I am giving you a chance to air your grievances."

The religionists stood mute. The Russian Molokans did not raise their heads; one of them, weakened from a hunger strike, sagged on his bended knees and was prodded in the ribs by the guardhouse sergeant. Then into the ring, from the group

of Socialists and humanitarians, stepped a boy who looked without fear at the major, the imposing staff, and Colonel Waterman, still viciously swishing his riding crop.

"We have been ordered," said the boy, "to cut grass in various parts of the camp. Some of us consider this non-combatant, military work, as it indirectly aids the war, and we cannot perform it."

"Sir," said the major, "you can't draw the line. No matter what you work at while you live in this country you are aiding the war, and when you die you are aiding the war because there is one less mouth to feed."

Another boy stepped forward.

"I don't agree with you, major," he said. "I am willing to keep our quarters clean and work within ten yards or so of our barracks but no further."

Colonel Waterman, whom I expected to see drop any moment from an apoplectic fit, so red with fury was his face, pointed his riding whip at the boy and cried through his teeth:

"Bah. You have a ten-yard conscience!"

And the major added angrily:

"You are one of those dangerous men in our camp—a Socialist, I'll wager, or an I.W.W., an obstructionist, a thorn in the flesh of our government. You split hairs. Now, what is your profession?"

"Barber, sir," replied the thorn in the flesh, with the ghost of a smile.

"Then you aided war."

"I don't see that."

"Did you ever shave a soldier?"

"Yes, sir."

"There you are, then. That soldier might not have been admitted to camp if he hadn't been shaved. So you aided war."

"I am one of God's children," announced another boy, stepping from the ranks of the Christian Crusaders, "and I cannot 'stand retreat' and salute the flag. I read in a book that our flag is 'our king and our God,' and the Bible says we shall worship one God only."

"Where did you read that?" asked the major.

"In an army book, a Y.M.C.A. book, I think."

"I don't believe it."

Then one of the prisoners from the guardhouse stepped up.

"A question of law," he announced. "I refused to do certain work in camp because I considered it military. For punishment I was put in the guardhouse. Yet now I have been asked to do the same work which I have already refused and for which I am imprisoned. Is that just?"

"I can't answer that," replied the major. "However, I believe your colonel is administrating the law justly and wisely."

No one laughed, not even those who remembered the cage and the tortures in the fort guardhouse; perhaps the humor of it cut too deeply for laughter.

For another half-hour the odd dialogue continued, but did not narrow by a jot the enormous cleft between the military mind and the religious conscience. The major quoted rules and regulations, set down in black and white; the religious Crusaders consulted some still, small voice within them, powerful for all its vagueness; the radicals were fortified by class-consciousness and hatred of our imperialist

exploiters; the humanitarians were strengthened by love—and all these queer souls, soldier, political heretic and saint, would have gone, and will go, perhaps, to their death rather than yield an inch of their ground. The dialogue was comic, most of it, but remembering the sober potentialities that lay behind it—death and the dungeon—its humor became dramatic, and bitter with the savor of tragedy. That is why, perhaps, no one laughed.

Then the major and his staff marched back to the veranda. The hearings were resumed. By and by it came my turn, and I climbed the steps with a corporal at my side and faced the major and the ring of uniforms gathered around a long table. My name was read from a list.

"This is your first hearing?" asked the major.

"No, sir. I was tried by Dean Stone at Camp Sherman."

"Have you anything to add? Will you now accept non-combatant service?"

"No, sir."

"Then," said the major, a little wearily, "I don't see the use of a second trial. That will be all."

And there I am, comrade, still on the fence of doubt. Nothing settled, nothing gained or lost, and more endless weeks and perhaps months to wait for the red tape of the army to unwind and bring word from Washington that will determine my fate. But my depression to-day has been washed away by the sight of beauty. After roll-call this evening a number of us obtained permission to climb the high, barren hill just behind the fort. On the crest was a shaft erected to the memory of Major Ogden, founder of the military post, who died in 1855. Below us, in the wooded valley, lay the fort, dim, stone roofs in the twilight, but we did not look long at that port of pain. We looked westward over the rounded humps of the plain, stretching away to a treeless horizon, and the whole sky was alight with the gray and amber sunset, so enthralling in its depth and sweep that we could only look and look until darkness stole over the ridges, and the lights of the fort pricked out a pattern in the valley, and we climbed downhill again to our captivity.

• • •

October 2.—A hundred and fifty of us rotting of inaction in a stone barracks. The Crusaders pull the blanket of their devotion over their heads to shut out the unfriendly world. They lose themselves in prayer, I lose myself in my books and writing, but every now and then the sharp reality of the world cuts through the vapor of our protecting screen like blinding light. Over there the war rolls on to a victory without peace. We hear only its echoes here, and see only its by-products. But they are enough. The flu is sweeping through the military post; we are under quarantine, and here and in Camp Funston, five miles away, the hospitals are filled and the railroad stations heaped with caskets. They have made a "sanitary squad" of us war objectors; with sickle, rakes, hoes and barrows we are cleaning the dead grass and débris around the fort. We are glad to work in the crisp autumn air, but the evening hours crawl like sick things, inert under dreadful burdens.

We sleep on cots, about twenty in a room, and at night the Crusaders gather for sober debate. Among them are two or three more articulate than their brothers, and these form a kind of supreme court

which deliberates on things theological with more patience than light.

Says one, a Holy Roller: "On judgment day the bad will be separated from the good, and the good will be taken up by the Lord and the bad won't."

Says another, a Mennonite: "Where will the others go?"

"Why, they will stay behind on earth."

"But what is judgment day, brother?"

"The end of the world, of course."

"Then," says the Mennonite, "how do you suppose the bad people will be able to stay behind on the earth if there is no earth?"

A dilemma, indeed. Sober, youthful faces look at each other in doubt; the supreme court is appealed to, and the supreme court, squatted on a cot, goes into protracted session with a Bible.

Do you wonder, comrade, that I miss Bill Davy, cocksparrow of Camp Sherman, with his clever impudence? No one here with whom to form a protective alliance. I wish I were with the radicals segregated in their tent colony down in the valley, but fate seems to have singled me out to abide with

sanctity in the doldrums. In the radical colony, of course, we would be spinning webs of different materials and perhaps just as gray and tedious. The difference would be merely a difference in jargon, and maybe it is only because I am more familiar with the jargon of the radicals that I would feel happier there. Essentially all our aims are alike: we seek security amid a hostile universe, the religionist through individual salvation and the radical through social readjustment. In my present emotional slough, both programs seem to me equally feeble, perhaps because the handful of war objectors here is minute compared to the army of Christians and socialists, in all nations, who threw over their internationalism and rushed to the colors. Both the church and Karl Marx have, officially, gone to war; in the final test both collapsed as instruments to further the brotherhood of man. Is there the seed of a new promise in the Russian uprising? Too soon to tell, and we hear so little. So confoundedly little. Send me books, magazines, comrade. The censor here is amiable and unbelievably stupid.

Forgive the lugubrious undertone of this, but de-

pression is inescapable in the grayness. I do not begrudge the Crusaders their interminable psalms and disputes. If only a fly of humor would settle on their theological web.

. . .

October 3.—What treasure was dumped into my arms when we filed past the mail window this morning. Those longed-for books, and the *Atlantic Monthly,* the *Dial* and the *Nation*—and best of all, your electrical letters leaving me tingling with new life and resolution. But what a blow to learn of the death of Tom Hefferan, my warm-hearted Irish friend of the University. Yet he wished to die so; he identified war with romance, and the "flaming funeral shroud" he sought has been draped around him. I remember Tom vividly, sadly. He was one of the "Stranglers," you recall, who filled whole nights with laughter and talk of books. He was too abundantly vital, imaginative, to walk decorously in quiet paths, and when war came he saw the helm of Mars as an invitation to dramatic escape from flatness. I recall, before we were drawn into the

shambles, Tom read Service's *Hymns of a Red Cross Man,* and "I Have a Rendezvous with Death," and would repeat passionate stanzas while some of us ridiculed him. Then, suddenly, he was gone; we had not yet entered the war, and when next we heard from him he was driving an ambulance in France. Then, later, into the trenches. I wish for Tom that he found the romantic escape that he sought. I think he had the ecstatic temperament to find emotional drama wherever there was action, however awful its aim. . . . And yet I fear for him. Did he sense, in those last days, the inhuman mechanics of the battlefield? Did he discover that "romantic" war passed with the coming of poison gas, and did his life go out—not as a glorious flame as he wished—but as a pale and tortured light indistinguishable in the horror of the rotting trenches?

. . .

October 9.—We are still cutting grass and weeds, with our fate undecided. We struggle over the hills around the military post with our sickles and rakes, contemptible in the eyes of the old army men who

officer the reservation, and evoking the jeers of the rookies who roll by in truckloads to Camp Funston beyond the horizon. The radicals from the "tent colony" have been shipped to Camp Funston. From underground reports that reach us here they are having a very bad time of it there. Last week, we hear, a number of them, including Larson, Hennessey, Breger, Kaplan, de Rosa and Downey were taken from their cots at midnight, dragged to the ice-cold shower baths, stripped of their clothing, and scrubbed with stiff brushes till one of them collapsed. Next day and the next the treatment was continued, sometimes several times during the night, and the officers in charge of the hazing swear to continue with the game till the Socialists haul down their colors. I can understand the hatred of the administration for the "reds," whose political heresy may in some future generation spell the doom of the soldier as a uniformed servant of capitalism, and I can almost forgive the brutality as a measure of self-defense and retaliation. But I can't forgive the treatment of the religious objectors who are serving God according to their lights in a nation that pro-

claims itself Christian and a protector of religious freedom.

Two days ago, for instance, I saw again the Molokans in the guardhouse, the patient, bearded fellows who have been hounded by many governments in many times for devotion to the pacifistic ideal of their Christ. These men, threatened with conscription in Russia, emigrated to the United States in the hope that here, at least, was a nation that constitutionally would protect them. They migrated westward, like the Mormons, and in the desert of Arizona founded their little colony. They were thrifty, hard-working, dividing their time between labor and worship. They were humanitarians and vegetarians, believing all human and animal life sacred. They were self-sustaining, taking nothing from America but the waste soil, which by irrigation and prodigious patience and toil they made bloom like a garden. . . . And then the war came, and the hand of the draft board, which knew their religious convictions and scruples, reached into this little colony to break the will of the men and make them take human lives though their hearts revolted at the

thought of killing even a sheep. A score of the bearded youths were dragged to Fort Huachuca, Arizona, where they were subjected to the water-hose torture and beatings. They would not put on the uniform; they would not obey military commands, for the military, in the eyes of their Christ, were killers and therefore accursed. A dozen or so of the Molokans were then transferred to Fort Riley, where I have seen them every day behind the bars of the guardhouse, queer, lost souls in an alien and hostile world.

And two days ago, while on the way back to barracks, I saw them lined up before the guardhouse. A boyish-looking lieutenant, pop-eyed with fury, was trying to make them stand at attention. The bearded dozen, in overalls stained by prison dirt, stood in disarray, heads down, knees bent, some of them with hands clasped in prayer.

"Attention!" snapped the lieutenant again.

No effect. The spirit of the dozen was reared as a stone wall against the young officer.

"Sergeant," cried the lieutenant, "get that line at attention."

The sergeant and two guards armed with rifles stepped forward. They shoved and poked; they rammed their rifle butts into the backs of the Molokans. And then, suddenly, the unkempt rank came to life. The bearded faces were raised—not to the lieutenant but to the sky—and their voices united in a wailing chant. Then their bodies moved in curious dance; they banged their steel-rimmed, heavy work-shoes on the cement pavement. "Oy-yo-oy!" they sang—or so it sounded to me, across the street —"oy-yo-aye!" and the sound of their shoes on the stone grew louder, their voices more frantic, and two of them lifted their hands widespread to heaven and prayed in a shrill sing-song.

Ridiculous, comrade? I have seen more curious religious zeal at some of our revival meetings in our sane and cultured communities at home.

The boyish lieutenant hopped fiercely in front of the line trying to make his commands heard above the din. The sergeant and the guards prodded with more vigor, but the dance and the chant continued. At length, beaten, the lieutenant ordered the dozen to be led back to their cells. The chant ended; the

men were herded by more prods from the gun-butts up the stone steps.

I thought then that the strange Lord of the Molokans had carried the day, and I rejoiced. But I learned to-day that their tribulations had only begun. Taken back to their cells they were forced to witness the torture of one of their members, Ivan Sussoff. Ivan was first given an ice-cold bath, and while he was naked and half conscious a guard plucked the hair off his legs, inflicting inhuman pain. Another placed a saber to his neck, but Ivan, babbling a prayer, would not yield; would not put on the uniform that was offered him, and in the end, beaten, the guards shoved Ivan again through the door of his cell, where he fainted.

And that night, again passing the guardhouse, I heard the Molokans singing their prayers behind the bars. The chant was burdened with unutterable pain and grief; it stirred and frightened me, standing in the shadow of the walls. One of the bearded men was close to the bars. I could see his head and shoulders and his upraised hands. I made a signal, hoping to communicate some message of

sympathy or comfort. But there was no answering wave. And then I saw that the Molokan was not looking down, but upward to the ceiling of his cell and the invisible Deity he served.

October 13.—The fag end of a dreary Sunday. There is nothing more desolate than a military post on Sabbath. Behind the bleak fronts of the officers' quarters some sort of social life, I suppose, goes on, but to the eye the reservation is sucked dry of ordinary human intercourse and what is left is a crystallized sediment that rattles like dry bones. The officers click down the street; here and there a group of privates sits on the barrack stairs, eating chocolate and ice-cream cones from the canteen and mixing the childish diet with incongruous, mannish oaths. . . . I fled to the wooded hollow behind the barracks, a long, dried river bottom choked with underbrush and cottonwoods. The fort was out of sight there, and with it vanished consciousness of the barracks, the coffins of the flu victims, the dreary parade ground, and nothing remained but the grate-

ful warmth of the sun sifting through the dried leaves. Gayety has been abandoned even in the woods. The foliage is gray-brown without a hint of crimson or yellow. Autumn stepped soberly into the valley from the sober plains. . . . I sat under a cottonwood till a chill wind blew down the gulley and then came back here to the barracks. The Mennonites are seated on their cots, some of them dozing over their Bibles, some chattering of their fears, their homes and their hopes, and some staring out of the window in frozen dejection. Across the hall the noncoms in charge of our outfit are routing the devil of boredom with songs and a mouth organ. The day—each day—drags to a close that seems never to end anything, solve anything or climax anything, for nothing happens.

So I read on and on. Odd, the things that are set down in print. I see in the magazines announcements of many books on Spiritism, proofs of the "Other World," etc., offering timely solace to mothers and wives of those whose "this-world" ended in the madhouse over there. And in the *Atlantic Monthly* the leading article is "The New

Death" by Winifred Kirkland. "Immortality has become a fact for our everyday life," she says, and proves by curious sentimental logic that the millions who are dying (on the side of the Allies) must of necessity be assured of life ever-lasting. Miss Kirkland is eloquent, but hardly original, her system of the sanctification of warriors having been anticipated by the Koran.

And meanwhile, I see in the papers that reach our barracks, the nation is being swept away on the surge of impending victory. A popular demand for "unconditional surrender" has taken the place of the fourteen peace points of President Wilson, though not long ago, while the odds were still in doubt, his message was hailed as a masterpiece. Comrade, I confess to have been seized by doubts as to the rightness of my stand when I read the President's remarkable document; can it be that a peace so just, so altruistic, will come out of the shambles in Europe? It seemed to me that my arguments were merely facile, my emotions merely negative and pessimistic, and that I should have followed as blindly as the rest the President's pledge of world redemption

through the sword. But now I see the barricades of hate reared against our leader; I trace the contempt of his program—even by his own people—and what hope is there then that among the Allies in Europe, where hatred and revenge lie deeper, there will be any support for the Wilson peace? Whatever the outcome, there is no doubt that his humanitarian "14 points" have aided the Allies more than a thousand regiments of troops; the Germans will clutch at them like straws in a gale—but will the Allies toss over the pledges as soon as the white flag goes up? If the vengeful note that is creeping through our daily press is any indication, they surely will. . . . Or is this my pessimism again? I rack my head over the problem, comrade; forgive me for filling these pages with dullness, but I can think of little else.

. . .

October 19.—We are moving. As war objectors we must make way for the military men. We have been ordered to live in the abandoned stables behind the barracks, and to-day we have been busy cleaning out the manure heaped high in the musty

stalls. The soldiers round about us are making appropriate comments; they should be more charitable for we are providing them some amusement in these dull hours. But stables are a paradise compared to the trenches—or prison. . . . To-day we saw the Russian Molokans leave the guardhouse. They piled their battered suitcases aboard a truck. They are going—a guard told us—to Leavenworth. Recalling my night in the cage there, I felt a chill go through me. These poor, lost followers of Christ; they will chant their hymns in the cell in Leavenworth, as they did here, endlessly, and they will rot in the "hole" in solitary confinement. But they sat in the truck, when I saw them last, without a word, without a sign, rolling over the hill to a fate as obscure and perilous as the destiny that hangs over all the mad world. We waved an unanswered farewell and turned back to our spading in the stable to prepare our home.

. . .

October 21.—Your letter depresses me, comrade. You write that you are unhappy because vou

stand on the sidelines, inactive, while the business of war roars all around you. You say that you feel selfish and ashamed because you have escaped physical torture while the world is crucified. I understand. Because I have felt so myself. I have felt craven, not for something I have failed to do, but something I have failed to endure. Though the worst may happen to me—imprisonment or torture, such as has been the fate of many of my friends—I am aware that all this would be but a mere scratch, a trifling ache compared to the unspeakable torments suffered by the soldiers in the trenches. I shudder for them, hope for them. And if I were not convinced that the awful sacrifice is fruitless, I should go mad with the thought that I had evaded the universal burden of pain.

But the pang of isolation is softened by the hope that by example or action I and my fellows may in some distant time point the way to victory over an enemy more powerful than the Germans—stupidity. I think of my old friends in the trenches, Irv Wood, Carl Berger and the rest. It would be good to be at their side, good to endure to the end with them,

if real truth or justice were served by my going. They went as volunteers, free-men, believing that a million men in arms would right wrongs that could be righted by no other way than by the sword. I, as a free-man, deliberately chose the other course, believing that a million men in each nation could achieve more toward peace with folded arms than with all the world's guns and gas. Force begets force. Hatred begets hatred. If the imagination of the workers now being sacrificed to the cannon cult in all nations is to be aroused by a new religion, someone must show the way. I wish that we war objectors were not the miserable handful that we are, but a clamoring host so that word of our existence would travel on the wind to all corners and men everywhere would spike their guns and refuse longer to serve the warrior-imperialists who have betrayed them. We are so few now. But later, in the next war—for more will come, be sure of it—our ranks may be formidable . . . our folded arms all-powerful.

This is the dream that sustains me, comrade. Let it sustain you, too. Do not grieve any longer that

your body bears no scars while all the world is mutilated. We need not be flagellants, self-torturers, to justify our existence. Such views lead to hysteria, masochism; cling to your sanity and humor lest we all be engulfed in darkness.

And if our dream is idle, comrade? Well, then, in our defeat we have sacrificed no other lives. But if the dream of the militarists should be proved a delusion? Ah, what blood is on their heads!

. . .

October 22.—This noon, after our work in the stables, we sat down in the mess-hall at the barracks. But before we had started our dinner a sergeant came in and bawled: "Attention!" The clatter of plates and knives ceased. The sergeant cleared his throat, looked all around the tables slowly, and when the suspense had grown dramatic he read from a paper in his hand. "This," he boomed, "is a report from headquarters. It bears an official communication from Camp Funston which declares that three conscientious objectors have been found guilty by courts-martial of refusing to obey a military com-

mand in wartime." He lowered the paper and once more looked solemnly and contemptuously at the upturned faces. "They were sentenced," he ended, "to be shot!"

He turned on his heel and went out.

We resumed our dinner, but I confess, comrade, that I have been served more appetizing entrées than this. Yoder the Mennonite, I think, refused a second helping of beans.

. . .

October 27.—Miserable, murky weather. Sunday, too. I read every line in the magazines you sent and out of sheer boredom went into the latrine to wash my shirts and pants that have not been improved by labor in the stable manure heaps. While I was scrubbing the pants with a hard brush one of the Christians—a Church of Holiness member, I believe—came in and reproved me for working on the Sabbath.

"But why not?" I asked.

"It is a sin."

"Then I am sinful?"

"You are, brother."

"And compared to me, you are good and not sinful?"

"Well, yes."

"Don't you see then," I asked, "that if everybody in the world were good and never washed pants on Sundays, you would never feel virtuous?"

"What do you mean, brother?"

"Well, in order to have virtue we must have the opposite quality to compare virtue to. I am really a virtuous man and hate to wash pants on Sunday, but I am sacrificing myself. I am making myself sinful so that you may be virtuous. Really, I'm creating goodness by being wicked. And yet, instead of thanking me for making you virtuous, you come in and scold me. Is that right?"

"Yes . . . no," stammered my friend.

He looked at me in confusion. Then he left me to my washboard in peace and went into the next room to his brethren. I apologized to him for my wicked logic—after my pants were washed.

• • •

November 1.—We have moved into a stable. There are about eighty or ninety of us left; the others have gone into hospital work, the Friends' Reconstruction Unit, to Camp Funston and to prison. What will happen to us, no one knows. We sit in the dim stable and wait. We cleaned the manure out of the stalls, laid wooden planks on the cold concrete floor, and brought in cots from the barracks. Before the cavalry moved out of the fort, this was the "F" stable, and above each of the stalls where we sleep is a large tin placard bearing the name of a horse. There is Funny, Fleet, Fall, Fast, Famous, Fuss, Fox, Fillip and Flam. My name, I notice, is Feather. Would that it were accurate, and that a kindly wind would blow me out of the window, over the dreary stone barracks of the fort, across the plains and home to you, the garden, and the hedge of barberry bushes. My imagination does blow just so, to home and happiness, but my body, alack, is rooted in a horse-stall. The empty stable, when we came, was noisy with sparrows in the eaves, filling the four walls with chatter, but our coming routed the host and now only a few are left,

cocking indignant heads from the farthest beams. Their commotion has been supplanted by a depressing silence, broken now and then when the Mennonites gather for a hymn. The odor of old manure is heavy in the place, and a cold wind blows through the crannies in the door . . . and yet I get vagrant amusement from watching a sober Amish in black clothes reading his Bible in a stall marked: "Flighty." The Dunkard who shares my stall is frightfully serious. He does not respond to my whimsies. He sits most often on the edge of his cot, peering at the floor between his feet. I would like to share with him the funniness of the "Flighty" sign above the Amish, but I know he would only look at me in amazement. So I sigh and go back to my reading. Neither can I share with him my book—Aristophanes' *Frogs,* which you so kindly sent. I am afraid the ribald Bacchus would not please him. It is hard to be alone.

. . .

November 3.—Last night I had a taste of freedom. For the first time since last September I was outside

of a military camp. The flu has passed; quarantine was lifted some time ago, and I received permission from the sergeant to go to Junction City, ten miles by electric railway. There were civilians on the car, so that my lack of uniform passed unnoticed. Can you imagine the sense of escape that came by changing from a "yellowback," a target for jeers, to an ordinary human, free to mingle with other humans? I poked my head out of the car window to breathe the delightful freshness of the prairies. When I reached the little city I walked alone through the streets, feeling—how can I describe my ecstasy—feeling like Feather, perhaps, whose stall I inherited. I rubbed shoulders with a crowd hanging around the postoffice, thrilling with the contact as if I had been wafted to the moon and were mingling with an incredible race of strangers. I dropped into a lunch room, not because I was hungry, but to expand and glow under the warmth of hospitality. The red-haired, stout, good-natured girl who served me pie and coffee watched me expand and glow, and I must have been a bit obvious, for she seemed ready to expand with me.

"You look happy," she said. "This your birthday?"

"No. Maybe that's why I am happy. Birthdays make you feel older, don't they? I feel younger to-night."

"Been visiting somebody down at the fort?"

"No. I belong at the fort. I got leave for to-night."

"How's it come you're not in uniform, buddy?"

"Well, I'm not a soldier. I'm what they call a 'c. o.'"

"Not one of them slackers?"

"Maybe you call them that."

"Go on. You're kidding. I've heard about those fellows. They wear whiskers and black hats, the boys told me."

"Not all of us."

She had been leaning over the counter, resting on her elbows and looking at me with friendly eyes. But now she straightened up without a word and went about her business. I had answered her questions automatically, and now I cursed myself for my candor, wondering what devil had prompted me to destroy a precious moment of human companionship.

I finished my pie and dropped a quarter on the counter. She made change, looking at me coldly, and did not respond to my good-by. I walked into the street. The fine warmth had gone, routed by my own folly. I walked about the streets for an hour, and could not recapture the joy I felt on coming into this village of delightful aliens. I knew now that we were, indeed, strange to each other.

. . .

November 8.—Our spirits last night went soaring, and then sank again to the depths, as I suppose yours did, comrade. We were sleeping in our stable stalls when the bells of the post chapel clanged and the whistle of the pumping station blew a prolonged blast. It was the signal that the armistice had been signed. We tumbled out of our cots in the cold darkness. "Hallelujah!" cried the Dunkard who shares my stall, and from the cubby-holes all around came amens, while at the far end of the stable the Mennonites gathered for a hymn. This time the hymn sounded sweet: I went to bed again with the sound of it in my ears. I was dizzy with a strange hap-

piness that kept me long awake and peopled the darkness with familiar faces. . . . This noon came news of the hoax but to-night's news means that the real peace day is not far distant. A Communist uprising in Hamburg! Liebknecht's Spartacists pulling down the temples of the old order in Berlin. Long live the revolution—and yet I see new breakers ahead. It is the pious wish of the Allies to save the world for democracy, but if Germany grows too uproariously democratic and the radical movement promises to spread to Buckingham Palace and Paris, I can see the Allies renewing the war to reëstablish the old safe and sane autocratic order of things. . . . So it may be that I shall dwell for some little time in our horse barn.

. . .

November 11.—Too good to be true. Too joyful to write about. We are trying, dimly, to comprehend what the peace means. What it means to the men in the trenches is too staggering to comprehend at all; what it means to our brother war objectors in the cells of Leavenworth and Alcatraz we can

vision, and we are grateful beyond words that their tribulations may soon end, for it is inconceivable that with peace signed they will be doomed to serve out their terms of from ten to twenty-five years. And what it means to us who have not yet been court-martialed or sentenced is all a mystery. Rumors are that we will be tried again by the board, and I shall then ask to be released to the Friends' Reconstruction Unit, which is relieving the awful distress behind the lines. Now that the war is over and madness has had its day there is work to do in the sane field of rebuilding, reanimating the human wreckage that the great madness has exacted. And ah how I glow at the thought of seeing you, seeing the sunny world again!

. . .

November 17.—We are off again. Twenty-five of us leave to-morrow for Camp Grant, Ill., where, we understand, we shall be given another trial.

. . .

Camp Grant, Illinois, November 20.—It is over. So swift, this last hearing. We are quartered with

some one hundred and fifty objectors in a barracks across the street from the guardhouse. This morning we stood again in line before the captain's quarters in a farmhouse, where Judge Julian Mack of Chicago was holding court. Again the long wait; again I was placed last in line because I could not be grouped with the religionists. And when at length I faced the judge he was already helping his clerk pack up his records. He asked me a few hurried questions. "And what do you wish to do now?" he ended. "Join the Quakers in their French Reconstruction Unit." "Good. So recommended," he said to the clerk. And it was over. . . . And so, comrade, if I do go to France, and we face a new parting, it will not be like this—it will be as heaven compared to this. . . . And just now I had a curious thought. I remembered my first day in Camp last July, when I refused the uniform and was taken to the captain's quarters. I remember how sinister looked the official army orders on his desk, and how I wondered what fate the military "red tape" would unwind for me. And it seems to me that I have been spared the fate of my friends in Leavenworth because of that very

red tape. Delay . . . bungling . . . misunderstandings . . . three trials when the first should have sufficed . . . and the final trial after the armistice. I shall make a song of the army red tape, comrade, and we shall sing it joyfully.

. . .

November 23.—We are stewing in a barracks, inactive save for a dose of calisthenics and a cross-country run in the snow every morning. Yesterday we saw six war objectors taken out of the guardhouse across the road. One looked very ill. They are being sent home, we hear. I have worked now and then as K.P. The mess sergeant is surly, savage. The cook told me he drinks a half dozen bottles of vanilla extract every day for its alcoholic content and it doesn't agree with him.

. . .

November 27.—You have been here and gone, comrade, and that hour with you was brief as a flash but beautiful as a flower. The guard who watched us yesterday came in to visit me this morn-

ing, and I made him a little present for his kindness in letting you stay ten precious minutes longer than your permit. I feed on the memory of that hour, while the days crawl.

. . .

December 9.—Last night the colored cooks of our barracks, kindly fellows with an enormous fund of playfulness, held a session of Kangaroo Court and court-martialed seven of us for all manner of crimes and misdemeanors. The "judge" used a turnip as a mallet and splattered it over his soap-box bench trying to keep order. . . . What relief, this horse-play, from the sober sloth of waiting, just waiting.

. . .

December 14.—Free, comrade! And the weight of the months has almost been canceled by the beautiful farce of the Army's final gesture. I have been set free and I have been given a blue discharge paper. It reads: "Not recommended for reënlistment!"

FREEDOM AND AFTER

FREEDOM AND AFTER

The hills were white with the Christmas season when I came home. The frozen lagoons of Lake Wingra spiraled through the reeds brittle with frost, and from the tips of their leaves the snow fell in feathery clumps as we brushed them in swinging by on our skates. Meta and I left the narrow channel and headed out into the lake, a keen wind cutting our faces and whipping the snow across the clear spaces on the ice in delicate, fan-like runnels. There were many people on the lake, and many friends—good friends to whom we had clung and who had clung to us in the year of the storm. And now the dark robes of foreboding had fallen away from all of us, leaving us exulting in a fresh vitality almost giddying in its intensity.

Freedom. Freedom to do, to think and to speak without the restraining hand of the military, or the black looks and whisperings of neighbors. But dearer than these, for Meta and me, the freedom of

geographical space, the liberty to move. We skated on the Four Lakes, we skiied down the steep slopes of Eagle Heights, and we walked on frozen ruts and through highway drifts from village to village, stopping at the wayside hotels remembered from our wedding journey. This time no cloud came between us and the out-of-doors; white earth and frosty sky and all the roads to the farthest horizon were ours, and no heavy hand on the shoulder would stay our wandering.

For one swift, joyous month. Then I said:

"There is my pledge. I must join the Quakers and go abroad with the Reconstruction Unit. They are rebuilding, in the lands of the Central Powers as well as the Allies, the things which the war destroyed. It is a good work."

"They will need women, strong women," said Meta. "I will go with you."

I traveled with high hopes to Philadelphia. For a week I conferred with the Friends, for another I waited. And then the word came that no member of the Reconstruction Unit of German parentage could obtain a passport.

But there was work in America, too. The war was over, but the spirit of the war lived on. Militarism rode triumphantly home from the battlegrounds. Whatever disillusionment may have been brought back by the men in the trenches, there was none among the army bureaucrats in Washington. Forgetting that it was the avowed aim of the United States to drive militarism forever from the world—or had they seen from the first the mockery of that ideal?—they united in a drive to force upon the nation a system of compulsory army training in peace time. Their lobbyists thronged the halls of Congress; their spokesmen among the lawmakers introduced bill after bill, all based upon the Prussian conscription system which but a few months before had been execrated, and their propagandists flooded the press with appeals invoking the slogan of preparedness as justification for a standing army of half a million men.

In Washington there was an organization that combated the movement to militarize America. This was the American Union Against Militarism, financed largely by Quakers. For a year, while the

big-army fight was at its height, I worked for the Union. Our chairman was Oswald Garrison Villard, editor of the *Nation,* and the driving power behind the organization was Charles T. Hallinan, its secretary, an Irishman of wit, vitality and unbounded enthusiasm.

They were needed. We were handicapped by poverty. We labored, four of us, in one tiny office whose walls were lined with great stacks of bundled pamphlets. Some weeks we received no pay, and some weeks we lived on the generosity of the stenographer, a well-to-do girl with ideals. The bulk of our funds went into the distribution of printed matter: hundreds of thousands of circulars, letters, pamphlets sent to people and newspapers from coast to coast. The results were measurable. Congressmen began to be bombarded by telegrams and resolutions of protest against the militarization of America—which was, during those months, deporting or jailing radicals in great batches. The big-army men adopted new tactics. They introduced innocent army appropriation bills, but attached to a number of them were provisions for universal, peace-time

conscription. It was our particular work and joy to ferret out these riders. Each day, when Congress was in session, I collected the bills that had been introduced, and each day we studied them. When the concealed threat was uncovered we exposed the fact in a new deluge of letters, and when the bills were up for hearing by the military affairs committees we marshaled its opponents into line, armed with arguments.

Summer came. Meta had ended her senior year at the university, and she joined me. We found a desk for her in the overcrowded office. More work flew from her willing fingers; more dust showered from the bundles of pamphlets lining the walls.

Months of toil in the stuffy, breathlessly hot room overlooking the treasury building. Months of living in a two-room apartment in overcrowded, post-war Washington. Months of rubbing elbows with the war's backwash: soldiers, maimed and bandaged, standing in mute, sullen lines hour after hour in the heat, waiting on the sidewalk in front of a war bureau for their miserly compensations; soldiers on crutches and in wheel-chairs, crowding the lawns

of the Walter Reed hospital, and officers, natty and spurred, clanking up the War Office steps to labor for peace-time conscription so that America—and their jobs—might be made perpetually safe.

Meta came down with scarlet fever. She was removed to the contagious hospital, where visitors were barred. Each day, work over, I scaled the palings of the great iron fence, and by clinging to the top bar I could speak to her through a grated window, ten feet away.

"What news?" she would call.

"All good. Another conscription bill has been voted down. The session is nearing its end. The fight is almost over. . . . And you?"

"I am improving. But I am working hard. There must be an epidemic, for the hospital is overcrowded. One nurse for this whole floor. How can one see the children suffer? I am helping her."

"You are ill. You must not overdo it."

But she did; she always did. And when, in three weeks, her quarantine was over and I called for her, she was sadly wasted. Her convalescence was painful and long. But at the end of a month we celebrated

a double triumph. Meta was strong again, and our fight at the office had been won. Every conscription bill had gone down to defeat; the last big-army rider to the appropriation bills had been exposed and defeated.

We locked the door of the dusty office. The wealthy stenographer with ideals paid up the back rent, and we went home.

Meta and I returned to the hills and lakes of Madison. The war and my expulsion from the university had blocked my academic ambitions, but there was work waiting in other fields. A newspaper had been founded in Madison, the *Capital Times,* which was fighting the good fight of liberalism. Cradled during the war, it had championed the progressive ideals of Senator Robert M. LaFollette in the days when that great leader was ringed by enemies and denounced as a traitor. The *Times* had protested vigorously against war-time hysteria and lynch-law; it had exposed and assailed patriot profiteers; it had demanded a definition of war aims and a just and humane peace. And for these things it had paid the

penalty. Its editor, William T. Evjue, staunch friend of LaFollette, had been hung in effigy; its newsboys had been bullied and mobbed on the streets, and local patriots had succeeded in driving nearly every inch of advertising from its pages. Once a mob had surrounded the newspaper plant. . . .

Here for ten years I labored, and still labor. The newspaper was printed in an abandoned ice-cream parlor on four wretched linotypes and a third-hand press. The editorial room, cluttered with a coal stove, was as familiarly stuffy as the office in Washington I had just left. But the air was bracing with the same enterprise, the same devotion, and on the lean, gray days when disaster seemed just around the corner we were stirred to fresh zeal by a glimpse of the elder LaFollette, who would climb the draughty stairs to our office and look in on us. "Don't yield an inch. There is a new day coming." . . . A new day came, at least for us, though he never lived to see it. Success, a large new plant, a tremendously widened sphere of influence. New times have brought new issues. The battle goes on.

. . .

And what of my comrades, the war objectors, left behind in the guardhouses and prison cells? Ultimately they were released, but not before undergoing fresh torment. On Alcatraz island, in January, 1920, long after the war was over, some of the war objectors were being tortured in cages, especially built for them. Cages as long and as narrow as coffins, in which they were manacled until they fainted from exhaustion and pain and hunger. News of the barbarity leaked out; there was an investigation, and the torture was abolished. In Leavenworth many endured torment in the black, solitary dungeon, chained to the bars. A prison strike was called, engineered largely by radicals, and after an official investigation the war objectors were removed from their cells to a special stockade. Meanwhile, reviewing boards reduced the death, life and other prison sentences. On November 23, 1920, two years after the armistice and fifteen months after the release of the last war objector in England, the last of the thirty-one Christian pacifists imprisoned at Fort Douglas, Arizona, were sent home.

And our comrades abroad? I met a British pacifist, a member of the Labor Party and lately elected

to parliament. He had spent four years in five different prisons.

"I was court-martialed nine times," he said. "It was the British policy to sentence war objectors to short terms of from three to six months. The theory was that a short term would break down the objector's resistance, and he would rather return to barracks and put on the uniform than endure another spell of prison. So that I was court-martialed, sent to jail, removed from jail after ninety days, sent back to the barracks and again court-martialed after once more refusing the uniform. An endless and savage cycle. Savage, because on each removal from my cell I had again to face the brutalities of the army barracks. Each time more terrible. On the last, a sergeant took me alone into a back room. He closed the door. He had a uniform hanging over his arm. He pulled a pistol from his pocket and pointed it at my head. 'I will give you just one minute to put on this uniform,' he said. 'If you do not accept it at the end of sixty seconds, you *will* wear the uniform—on your dead body.' He began counting. 'Do as you will, sergeant,' I said, and I

knew my last moment had come. He counted slowly to sixty. He did not fire.

"That was one of many such barracks tests, not counting the blows, the ostracism and contempt. And the prisons. You know what food there was for the British soldiers. Imagine, then, the rations of a war objector in prison. A bit of bread and weak tea. Once a day a crumb of bacon or meat, the size of your thumb. And solitude, silence—and oakum to pick. Some of us went mad in those four years, and some died. I became seriously ill. I have not yet recovered."

"You have regrets?"

"None. And gradually the conviction is growing in England that our course was right, and that no conceivable defeat could have made the British situation more awful than it is now, after our so-called victory. They are awakening to the hypocrisy, the ghastly stupidity of the thing. Out of this war to end wars have come not merely poverty and famine and a deranged economic life, but more wars and the seeds of more wars. The saber rattles again; the old cries of preparedness are raised in all nations,

and the same statesmen who lately were mouthing phrases about the menace of Prussian militarism are soberly repeating the old formulæ of balance of power and naval ratios. But in England a reaction is setting in, much sooner and more aggressive than in your America, because we suffered more. Let another war come in our generation, and I warrant you the ranks of the objectors will swell a hundred-fold. The militarists will not again find us so docile, nor their propaganda so effective. Here is a sign of the new trend: seven of us war objectors, branded for years as cowards and traitors, have been elected to parliament. To me, that is the supreme irony of the war."

Thus, our friends in England. Far worse was the lot of the French objectors, swayed by the vision of Romain Rolland. They were doubly punished. First, a long prison term at home, and then transportation to Guiana for the same term or longer. Some who were given eight-year terms were sent to Guiana for life. They are still there, in desperate want. They receive no help from the government, and it is al-

most impossible to earn money in the colony. Often those who finished their exile were unable to leave because they could not pay their transportation. These, too, are stranded in Guiana, almost in sight of the notorious Devil's Island where Dreyfus spent his long exile.

I have searched the records, and, save for Liebknecht, can find no mention of war objectors in Germany and Austria, nor any government rules set down for them. Does this mean that none resisted the war in the Central Powers, or does it mean that there were here and there solitary souls who did resist and who were taken away, quietly, and shot to death or hanged?

I do not know. But this I believe. Despite the "hole" at Leavenworth and the cages of Alcatraz, the American government, officially, dealt more humanely and generously with the war objectors than did any other nation.[1] The tortures, the beatings,

[1] A statistical summary of the number of American war objectors and their fate seems here pertinent. In *The Conscientious Objector in America,* by Norman Thomas (B. W. Huebsch, New York, 1923), Mr. Thomas writes: "According to the War Department, only 3,989 out of a grand total of 2,810,296 inducted men made any claim in camp for exemption from any form of military service as conscientious

were the work, generally, of the under-officers and privates in the army barracks and prisons, and when exposed were corrected. In America, however much the religionists and radical absolutists endured, some official cognizance was taken of the validity of the individual conscience, and the right to follow the commands of something higher than national patriotism, something more vital than the dictates of a military overlord.

. . .

One weighs results and consequences. One searches for significance in one's actions, seeking for

objectors on religious or other grounds. The number does not include all the men who declared their objection by a refusal to register and were sentenced by civil courts under the draft law. . . . The number of draft evaders, according to the War Department, was about 171,000. There were many times more men who by one device or another evaded service than objectors who made their positions clear and took the consequences. Yet it was these men who did not so much as try to avoid the draft who were most vehemently denounced as cowards and slackers. . . . Of the 3,989 objectors in camps, 1,300 originally accepted or were assigned to noncombatant service; 1,200 were furloughed to agriculture and 99 to the Friends' Reconstruction Unit in France, while 450 were sent to prison by courts-martial. . . . Nearly 90 per cent. of the objectors were religious. . . . A table given by Assistant Secretary of War Keppel shows that 17 objectors were sentenced to death, 142 to life terms, 89 to ten years, 73 to twenty years, 57 to twenty-five years, 47 to fifteen years, 29 to five years and 19 to thirty years."

signs that they have left an imprint or the hope of an imprint.

I have searched, and, despite the optimism of the Englishman, seem to have come away empty-handed. The fate that sustained the war objectors seems an idle dream. The torments they endured seem as empty of positive, social good as the torments, far greater, of the ranks in Flanders. Materialism—the acquisition of goods—remains the national religion, and battleships, wars and invasions are the inevitable fruits of acquisitive greed. Much may be hoped for in the new pacts that have been written and in the new and apparently kindlier understanding between America and England. But realistically weighed, these papers and pledges—however honestly intended—are the placid surface under which boils the nationalism of France, Italy, Japan, whose armaments grow ever more powerful; and so long as nationalism survives war hangs like a pall on the horizon. Even in Russia—Russia, which suffered most during the world calamity—martial fever again sweeps the citizens; and all because of the seizure of a railroad in distant China

they would be ready again to dance the death dance at a new piper's bidding. So much the world has learned, and so little.

Yet what can we offer, we dissenters, when the business of the soldier is still hailed as practical, courageous and romantic, while the protestations of the pacifist are scorned as sentimental, cowardly and colorless? What can we hope when youth cries for the risks and rewards of war, its mad music and its mad passion, and all that we offer in exchange is gray words and sternly folded arms?

I lie in the old glen, quieting my doubts with the balm of false harmony. So infinitely peaceful here, while the rumors of war creep again over the earth. And yet there is no peace, even here. I divine the impending struggle, even here in this fortress reared against the world. The green armies of spring are already pushing upward through the soil to lock in ancient strife. Blade will battle blade, the first buds of the spring beauty will fight the late frosts, and stripling trees will war one on the other, stretching toward the sun, while the earth will teem with creeping millions insistent on life. If their war were as

vocal as ours, the world would quiver with the noise of it. . . . Strife wherever I turn, wherever I lay my hand on the warm soil. And we had hoped to achieve something by our gesture against the universal lust for battle. . . . But we have, we have! Perhaps no far-reaching social goal, but one as vital. We have saved ourselves for ourselves; even those of us who died have saved our integrity. We live in society, but we live first of all with ourselves, and we could not live honestly or at peace with ourselves if we had taken human lives in war when all reason cried out against it. So much we have attained.

Feeling so, I arise from under the pine-tree in the glen, and the thought of all the warfare in the sod and over it does not move me, and the thought of human warfare that may come does not shake me with doubts. I shall live at peace with myself, even when war rocks the world once more, and resist again, and again, and again.

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JOHN DAY

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